

L E T T E R S

17 FROM THE *93*

MARCHIONESS

DE S É V I G N É,

TO HER DAUGHTER

Tras THE *Dobbys*

Countess DE GRIGNAN.

Translated from the FRENCH of the last PARIS
EDITION.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

She strikes each point with native force of mind,
While puzzled learning blunders far behind.
Graceful to sight, and elegant to thought,
The great are vanquish'd, and the wise are taught.
Her breeding finish'd, and her temper sweet ;
When serious, easy ; and when gay, discreet ;
In glitt'ring scenes o'er her own heart severe,
In crowds collected, and in courts sincere.

YOUNG.



D U B L I N :

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M D C C L X V I I I .

LETTERS

OF THE MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE.

LETTER CLI.

Madame DE SEVIGNE to the Countess DE GRIGNAN.

Paris, Wednesday 27 April, 1672.

MY DEAR CHILD,

*** I *** SHALL answer your two Letters, and will then give you some news from this country. Monsieur de Pomponne saw the first of your Letters, and I intend to shew him the greatest part of the other; he is gone from hence: it was in taking my leave of him before his departure, that I shewed him your Letter; as it was impossible to say any thing better, than what you wrote concerning your affairs: he has you in great admiration. I dare not tell you what he compares your style to: he was charmed with your description of the Saint Baume; and will, I am certain, be much more so with your second Letter. The Bishop * takes all occasions of expressing his desire to be reconciled to you: as he finds matter in such a train here, as to make such a reconciliation his interest, he is willing to do himself the credit of an inclination so suitable to his character and profession. It is thought that in a few days there will be a first president appointed for you †. I am extremely obliged to you for your lively description of the St. Baume, but it will not in the least take from my desire of seeing that hideous cave. The greater the difficulty of getting to it, the greater will be my inclination to

* The bishop of Marseilles, between whom and the Grignan family there had been a dispute.

† For Provence, vacant by the death of Monsieur d'Opede.
See Vol. II.

go; but after all, I do not much care about it neither, for you are the only thing I seek in Provence: when I have got you, I shall be in possession of all I wish for. My poor aunt continues extremely ill: I say a thousand kind things to her in your name, which she receives with pleasure. M. de la Trouffe writes her a great many on his side, but these death-bed professions of friendship I could willingly excuse; if people begin their love and regard for me at such a time only, I had as lieve be without it. One should shew one's love during a person's life-time, as you my dear child know so well how to do, and endeavour to make it as pleasant and easy to them as possible, and not be continually heaping sorrow and vexation on those who love us: it is rather too late to change one's behaviour when they are dying. You know how I have been always used to laugh at what they call a good bottom: such an one is very good at the bottom. I know of but one kind of these good bottoms, which is your own; and that is such a one as might satisfy the most difficult. For my part, I always consider things as I find them; as an example of which, I assure you, that no one can be better pleased with another than I am with you. I shall send Mad de Coulanges that part of my Letter which belongs to her; that dear Letter must be cut into a thousand pieces; however I shall have a few hundreds to my share to comfort myself withal: all dear, all charming as these Letters are, shall I tell you, my lovely child, that I heartily wish to receive no more of them. But now for news:

The king sets out to-morrow: there will be a hundred thousand men fewer in Paris, according to the best calculations, from the different quarters of this city: for these four days past, I have been doing nothing, but taking my leave of those who are going off. I was yesterday at the citadel, with an intent to take my leave of the Grand-master*, who had been to seek for me, but I did not meet with him: however, I found La Troche there weeping for her son, and the countess † weeping

* The Count de Lude, grand-master of the Ordnance.

† Renee-Elenore le Bouille, first wife to the Count de Lude, was a great huntress, and ~~she~~ went dressed like a man: she passed most part of her life in the country, following the diversions of the field.



weeping for her husband: she had on a grey hat, which she flapped over her face in the excess of her grief: it was an odd sight. I believe there are very few instances of hats being seen on such occasions; I think I would for that time, at least, have put on a cap or an hood. But, in short, they both set out this morning, the wife for the family-seat, and the husband for the war; and, good heavens, what a war! it is likely to be the most bloody and dangerous one, according to all accounts, that has been seen since the passage of Charles VIII. into Italy.

The Iffel * is defended with twelve hundred pieces of cannon, with 60,000 foot, with three great towns, and with a large river on this side of it. The Count de Guiche, who knows that country, shewed us a map of it at Madame de Verneuil's; it is an astonishing enterprise; Monsieur the Prince is very much taken up with this affair. There came to him the other day a pleasant sort of a fellow, who told him he knew a secret to furnish him with money. My friend, said he, I thank thee; but if thou hast any invention to make us pass the Iffel without being knocked on the head, thou wilt do me a great pleasure, for I know of none.

He has for lieutenants, the marshals d'Humieres, and de Bellefont. I have a particular relation to give you concerning them, which you ought to be informed of. The two armies are to join; the king will command Monsieur †, Monsieur will command the Prince ‡, the Prince will command M. de Turenne and M. de Turenne will command the two marshals, and even the army of M. de Crequi. The king spoke of this to the Marshal de Bellefont, and told him, that it was his will he should obey M. de Turenne, without any prejudice to his dignity. The marshal, without asking time to consider of it (that was his fault) answered, that he should not be worthy of the honour his majesty had conferred on him, if he should disgrace himself by an obedience without example. The king desired him, with much good nature, to consider of the answer he had

* According to the Dutch pronunciation, the Scheld.

† The duke of Orleans, the king's brother.

‡ The prince de Conde.

made him; he told him he desired this proof of his friendship, and that his own disgrace would be the consequence of his refusal. The marshal replied, that he saw very well he should lose the happiness of his majesty's good graces, and ruin his own fortune; but that all this appeared to him more eligible, than to forfeit his esteem: and that he could not obey M. de Turenne, without dishonouring the dignity to which he had raised him. Then (answered the king) we must part: the marshal made a very low bow, and took his leave. M. de Louvois, who does not love him, immediately sent him an order to go to Tours. His name is erased out of the list of the king's household: he is in debt fifty thousand crowns more than all his estate is worth: he is utterly ruined; but he is contented. It is not doubted but he will retire to La Trape. He offered his equipage, which was made at the king's expence, to his Majesty, to be disposed of as he pleased. This was interpreted as a design to affront the king: nothing could be more innocent. All his friends and relations, and all who have any attachment to him, are inconsolable: Madame de Villars* is so likewise. Do not fail to write to her, and to the poor marshal.

The marshal d'Humieres, who was supported by M. de Louvois had not appeared at court since, and waited till the Marshal de Crequi had given his answer. He came post from the army to give it himself: he arrived yesterday, and had a conversation of an hour with the king. The Marshal de Grammont was called in, who maintained the rights of the Marshals of France, and desired the king to judge who did the greatest honour to that dignity: they, who to support its grandeur, exposed themselves to the danger of disobliging his Majesty; or he, who was ashamed to bear that title, who had effaced it out of every place where it was found; who esteemed the name of marshal as an injury to him, and who affected to command in quality of a prince. The conclusion of all this was, that the Marshal de Crequi is gone to his country-house to plant cabbages, as well as the marshal d'Humieres.

* She was a Bellefont, and was aunt to the marshal.

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNÉ. 7

This is all the present subject of conversation. It is much disputed whether they did well or ill in it: their partisans on both sides are grown warm in the debate. The countess * has talked herself into a sore throat, and the count de Guiche is so hoarse he cannot speak: the debate between them grew into a perfect comedy, there was a necessity of parting them. The truth is, these are three men of great importance in carrying on the war, and it will be difficult to supply their places. The prince is very much concerned at losing them, on account that his Majesty's interest must suffer by it. M. de Schomberg, having commanded armies in chief, refuses likewise to obey M. de Turenne. In a word, France, though it abounds so much in great generals, will scarce find any who will accept of employments by means of this unhappy misunderstanding.

M. d'Aligre has the seals; he is fourscore years old; they are only deposited with him. He is chose, like a pope, merely with a view to a quick succession. I have just been making the tour of the city. I have been with M. de la Rochefaucault; he is oppressed with grief upon taking leave of his sons; but in the midst of all this concern, he begs me to say a thousand tender things to you from him. We have had much discourse on this melancholy occasion. All the world is in tears, for their sons, their brothers, their husbands, their lovers. One must be of a miserable selfish temper, not to be deeply interested in the departure of the whole kingdom. Dangeau and the Count de † Sault came to bid us adieu. They informed us, that the king, instead of setting out to-morrow, as it was believed he would, in order to prevent the effusion of tears, went this morning at ten, without letting his intention be publicly known. He set out only with twelve in company with him; every one is hurrying after him. Instead of going to Villers-Coterets, he is gone to Nanteuil, where it is thought that † others who have disappeared of late, will meet him. To-morrow he is to go to Soissons, and afterwards he will follow the same route that

* Madame de Fiesque, who always went by the name of the Countess.

† Afterwards Duke de les Dignieres.

† The Dutchess de la Valliere.

was first resolved on. If you do not think this to be gallant, you need only declare your opinion of it. The universal melancholy that reigns there, is beyond imagination. The queen remains here in the quality of regent: all the principal companies have been to pay their compliments to her. Here is a very strange war, begun in all the pomp of sorrow. On my return hither, I found our good cardinal, who came to take his leave of me: we talked an hour together; he has writ you a little valedictory epistle, and he sets out to-morrow. M. d'Uzez is going away too: who is it that is not leaving Paris? alas! it is I alone; but I shall have my turn as well as others. It is true, as you say, that it is a cruel thing to take a journey of two hundred leagues, and at the end of it to find one's self at Aix

I am extremely glad you are not breeding; I love M. de Grignan for it with all my heart. Tell me, if this happiness was owing to his great temperance, or to his tenderness for you; and if you are not pleased with the liberty of going abroad, and diverting yourself in Provence, and of receiving me there without the danger of a fall, or a miscarriage. I beg, my dearest child, that you will let me know every thing that happens to you. I am like a lost creature without your Letters.

LETTER CLII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 29 April, 1672.

MONSIEUR d'Uzez set out this morning, I took my leave of him with the greatest concern, at losing a person so useful and friendly as he had been in our affairs: I am greatly touched with his merit, and love and honour him exceedingly. I hope for the pleasure of seeing him again in Provence: when he is there I hope you will in all things implicitly follow his advice; he knowing how matters go here, and will on all occasions, stand up for the honour of M. de Grignan. I have wrote to M. de Pomponne, and did not fail to enclose two sides of your Letter; nothing can be added to what you have there said. Had I attempted to copy it, I know I should have heightened some expressions,

or rather indeed have lowered them, which would have robbed them of one half their force: I have backed your Letter with one from myself, wherein I desire of him to observe the turn they have given to this business, and in what a fawning and artful manner they strive to cloak their insatiable desire of crossing M. de Grignan in all his undertakings. I am sure this will have a favourable effect on M. de Pomponne, for it is directly contrary to the proceedings of every honest and sincere person. You must know when I get hold of a circumstance of this nature, I am very able to set it in its proper light, and make the most of it for my own advantage: I expect his answer with impatience.

Our cardinal set off yesterday. There is not now one man of quality left in Paris: they are all gone with the king, or to their respective governments, or else into the country; of these latter, however, there are but few. I cannot but look upon M. de S—— to have much more courage than those who are to pass the Iffel: who, though young, rich, and in full health, has been able to support the sight of every man of merit and fortune moving off, without seeming any more concerned about following them, than if they had been going upon a party to pick shells. I did not say a party of hunting, for then he would infallibly have followed them: he is going very peaceably down to S—— Tayau, where he is to set up his rest for the remainder of the summer-season: he is infinitely more wise than the others, who blindly follow custom, *la Regina del monde*. It is certainly much better to be a philosopher, and pass one's life in ease and tranquility, than to expose one's self to perpetual dangers, and a life of toil and hazard for a mere phantom: thus judiciously argues Monf. de S——

Every creature is low spirited; not a day passes without seeing some one or other of one's relations going to expose themselves to imminent danger. This is an heart-breaking reflection. Even majesty itself was not exempt from the tender weakness, in this sudden departure. It is certain that nothing was received by some folks at Nanteuil: these same folks are not to return in a hurry to St. Germain, on account of a little business they

have to tranfact in about two or three months hence, which will be best done at a country-house*.

The king is much less incensed against M. de Crequi than against the two others; because he gave his reasons in a very proper manner. Marshal Bellefont was too dry, too much of a piece: do not forget what is necessary to be done on this occasion.

You are now in the midst of your journey, my dear, you cannot do any thing better at present; one is not always in a condition, or in a humour to travel. If you was less adventurous, I should be more easy; but you love to attempt uncommon exploits, where coach has never passed; this gives me uneasiness. Take my advice, child, and never force nature; but ride on horseback, or be carried in a litter like other people. Consider what it is to have an arm, a leg, or a neck broke. Write to me as often as you can, especially from Monaco.

I am very well with the Count de Guiche; I have seen him several times at M. de la Rochefoucault's, and at the Hotel de Sulli: he always attacks me, he fancies that I have wit; we have rallied much together. He told me in what a barbarous manner his sister † has been maimed by letting blood; it moves one to fear and compassion. I have never seen him with his *Chimene* ‡, they are both of them personages so exactly formed upon the model of an old Romance, that there is no suspicion of the least indelicacy in their passion, and it is thought they have each of them their reasons to observe inviolably the laws of honour.

It is two months since La Marans has seen *her son* §; he has no very good opinion of her. Shall I tell you what she said the other day? You know her sayings are a little remarkable. She declared that for her part, she had rather die than grant favours to a man she loved; but

* This is spoken of one of the King's mistresses, who was at that time thought to be with child by him; probably it might be meant of Madame de Montespan.

† Madame de Monaco.

‡ Madame de Brissac.

§ Monsi. de la Rochefoucault is the person always meant in these Letters by the son of Mad. de Marans, that Lady always calling him son, and he styling her Mother.

but that if she found a man that loved her, and who was not quite disagreeable, and that she was entirely free from passion for him, she might perhaps prevail with herself to venture on a little compliance. Her son preserves in his memory this virtuous resolution of hers, and makes it an infallible rule, by which he can judge of her intrigues. He told her he approved of this distinction the more, because it was delicate and new; he had before conversed only with creatures of such gross imaginations, that they could not discern the one from the other, but always confounded the man that was beloved, with him that was favoured: but that it was agreeable to her nicer taste, to reform these old maxims, which had no manner of delicacy in comparison of the refined sentiments she endeavoured to introduce. It is very pleasant to hear his reflections on this subject. Since he has had his key to his mother's behaviour, he has lost sight of her, but he draws his own consequences without any difficulty.

Friday Night.

I HAVE seen Madame de Plessis Belliere; she related to me the conversation between the king and the Marshal de Crequi*. It was very long, very pressing, very reasonable, and urged with a very moving address. If he had been the first that had spoke of it, this matter had doubtless been accommodated; he proposed five or six expedients which might have been received, had not the King made it a law to himself not to yield to any accommodation. The Marshal de Bellefond had spoiled the affair. M. de la Rochefaucault says, that the General has nothing congenial in his mind, nothing which joins easily with the sentiments of other persons. The Marshal de Crequi in the deepest concern said to the King, Sir, take from me the Marshal's staff: may not that be done at your pleasure? Let me serve this campaign simply as Marquis de Crequi; perhaps I may deserve to have it restored to me again by your Majesty at the end of the war. The King was touched with the concern he saw him in, and as he went out of the cabinet, transported with grief

* The Marshal de Crequi was son-in-law to Mad. de Plessis-Belliere.

grief, scarce knowing any one he met, he said to the Marshal de Villeroy, follow the Marshal de Crequi; he is almost beside himself. He spoke of him with esteem, and without resentment, and has made his company of guards serve in the army. The Marshal is gone to his house at Marines near Pontoise, with his lady and children. The Marshal d'Humieres is gone to Angers. This, my dear, has been the only subject of conversation here these four days. There is not a soul of any credit left in Paris.

Voici votre tour

Venez, Messieurs de la Ville!

Parlez nous d'amour;

Mais jusqu'à leur retour. †

My aunt is somewhat better than she was, so that we are resolved to set out about the middle or end of May. In the mean time, I shall carefully inform you of every thing that passes. Adieu, my dearest girl, I am yours without reserve or limitation.

* L E T T E R CLIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 4 May, 1672.

IT is impossible, my dear, to tell you how much I pity, how much I praise, and how much I admire you: thus I divide my discourse into three heads. First, I *pity you* in being so subject to the vapours and low spirits, as they will certainly be of prejudice to you. Secondly, I *praise you* for being mistress of them when there is occasion for it, especially on M. de Grignan's account, whom I know they must make very uneasy; it is giving a pleasing proof of the regard and care you have for him. Thirdly, and lastly, I *admire you* in the constraining your natural inclination, to appear what you are not: this is really heroic, and is the fruit of your philosophy: you have ample matter in yourself to excuse it. We found out the other day, that there is

† Thus Englished.

Now, now is your time; come each smart powder'd cit,

And make your approaches, and sigh at our feet:

We permit you to tell with what passion you burn,

But, hark ye! 'tis only till they can return.

* The Letters marked with an asterisk, are such as never before appeared in print.

no real ill in life, except great pain; all the rest subsisting merely in imagination, and depending entirely on the different conceptions we form of things. All other evils are curable either by time, alleviation, or strength of mind; may be lightened by reflection, religion, or philosophy. But as to pain, it tyrannizes over both soul and body. A trust in God and his mercies may indeed make us bear them with patience, and turn them to our eternal profit, but still it will not diminish them. Here now is a discourse, which has all the air of being brought fresh from the Faubourg Saint Germain *, and yet it comes from my poor aunt's, where I was the leader of the conversation. The subject arose naturally from the violent sufferings of that poor dear woman, which she maintains are infinitely superior to every evil that life is subject to. M. de la R. F. is of that opinion likewise: he is still tormented with the gout; he has lost his true mother † and he lamented her death in so tender and affectionate a manner, as made me almost adore him: she was a lady of extraordinary merit, and was the only person in the world, he said, who was unchangeable in her love to him. Fail not to write to him, both you and M. de Grignan.

Your journey seems to be excellently well-timed, perhaps ours may tally with it. We have the greatest desire in the world to pass some part of our Whitsuntide on the road either at Moulins, or at Lyons. The Abbe wishes it no less than myself. There is not a man of quality (of the sword I mean) in Paris. I was on Sunday to hear mass at the Minims. We shall find our poor Minims very empty, said I to Mademoiselle de la Trouffe, we shall not find a creature there except the Marquis d'Allaye ‡. Well, we went into the church, where the first and only creature we saw was the Marquis d'Allaye: I could not help laughing at the oddity of the thing; in short, he is left behind, and is going to his government on the sea-coast. The sea-coast must be guarded, you know, child.

Theo
* That is, from Madame de la Fayette's, at whose house M. de Rochefaucault, and some of the most select company in Paris used to meet.

† Gabrielle du Pleffis Liancourt.

‡ Paul d'Escoubleau, Marquis d'Allaye and de Sourdis, governor of the city and country of Orleans, and of the Pays Chartrain.

The lover * of her whom you stile *the incomparable*, did not meet with her at the first stage; but found her on the road, in a house of Sanguin's, a little beyond that which you know: it is thought he then saw the children for the first time. The fair one remains there attended by a guard, and a female friend of he's, she is to be there for four or five months. Mad. de la Valiere is at St. Germain's, Mad. de Thianges is here with her father. I saw her daughter the other day, she is beautiful beyond all that can be imagined. Some people pretend that the King went strait on to Nanteuill, but it is certain that the fair-one is at the house called *Genitot*. I tell you nothing but the truth; there is nothing I have a greater aversion and contempt for than idle stories.

You are set out then, my dear; well, I will live in hopes of hearing from you at every stage. I shall not be behind hand on my side. I am under the greatest uneasiness about your poor brother, on account of this terrible war, which is likely to be attended with the most bloody consequences, whenever I think of it, it fills me with horror; but then again, I comfort myself with the thoughts that it may not turn out so bloody as I apprehended, for I have seldom seen things happen as one imagines they would. Pray let me know what is the matter between the Princess Harcourt and you †. Brancas is just wild to think that you should not love his daughter. M. d'Uzez has promised to re-establish peace between all parties: I should be glad to know what occasioned the coolness between you.

You tell me that your son's beauty grows less, and his merit increases; I am sorry for the loss of his beauty, and I am rejoiced to find that he loves wine; this is a little spice of Brittany and Burgundy together, which will produce a mighty pretty effect with the prudence of the Grignan's. As for your daughter, she is quite the reverse; her beauty increases, and her merit lessens. I assure you, she is very pretty, and as obstinate as a little devil; she has her little wills and designs

* The King and Madame de Scarron.

† Frances de Brancas, wife to Alphonso-Henry-Chartres, of Lorraine, Prince of Harcourt; and daughter to Charles de Brancas, gentleman of honour to Queen Anne of Austria.

designs of her own; she diverts us extremely; she has an admirable complexion, blue eyes, black locks, a nose neither handsome nor ugly; her chin, her cheeks, and the turn of her face, are perfectly just. I shall say nothing about her mouth, she will do very well with it. Her voice has a very agreeable sound: Madame de Coulanges thinks it such an one as very well suits her mouth.

I fancy, my dear child, that I shall at last be of your opinion: I meet with some vexations in life that are insupportable, and notwithstanding my fine reasoning at the beginning of this Letter, there are many evils that, though in fact not so severe as bodily pain, are nevertheless equally to be dreaded. I meet with such frequent disappointments in life, that in short I think it is, as you say, a very disobliging life.

When the Chevalier de Lorraine went away, he was making love to the angel *, and MONSIEUR seemed to approve of it. I expect Letters from Pomponne: we have no First President yet.

LETTER CLIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 6 May, 1672.

MY dear, I must return to story-telling, it is a folly of mine that there is no resisting. Therefore, prepare for a description. You must know then, that I was present yesterday at a service performed in honour of the Chancellor Seguier †, at the Oratory. Painting, Sculpture, music, and oratory, in a word, the four liberal arts, were at the expence of it. Nothing can be imagined finer than the decoration: it was designed by Le Brun. The Mausoleum reached to the top of the dome, adorned with a great number of lamps, and with a variety of figures, characteristick of him in honour of whom it was erected. Beneath were four deaths, bearing the marks of his dignities, as having taken from him those honours together with his life. One of them held his helmet, another his ducal coronet, another the ensigns of his order, another the chancellor's mace. The four sister arts, painting,

* Louisa-Elizabeth Rouxel, daughter to the Marshal de Grancie.

† Peter Seguier, who died the 28th of January 1672.

painting, music, eloquence, and sculpture, were represented in the deepest distress, as deploring the loss of their protector. The front of the representation was supported by the four virtues, fortitude, temperance, justice, and religion. Above these four angels, or genii, received the soul of the deceased, and seemed pruning their purple wings to bear their precious charge to heaven. The Mausoleum was adorned with a variety of little seraphs, who supported an illuminated shrine, which was fixed to the top of the cupola. Nothing was ever seen so magnificent or so well imagined; it is Le Brun's master-piece. The whole church was adorned with pictures, devices, and emblems, which all bore some relation to the life, or office of the Chancellor; and some of his noblest actions were represented in painting. Madame de Verneuil † offered to have bought all this decoration at an excessive price; but it was resolved by the whole company who had contributed to it, to adorn a gallery with it, and to consecrate it as an everlasting monument of their gratitude and magnificence. The assembly was numerous and beautiful, but without confusion. I sat next to M. de Tulle §, and Madame Colbert. There mounted a young father of the Oratory to speak the funeral oration. I desired M. de Tulle to bid him come down, and to mount the pulpit in his place; since nothing could sustain the beauty of this pompous shew, and the perfection of the musick, but the force of his eloquence. My dear, this young man trembled as he began, and we all trembled for him. Our ears were at first struck with an accent not entirely free from the rusticity of Provence; (he is of Marseilles, and is called Leno.) But as he recovered from his confusion, he began to display the lustre of his eloquence. He established himself so well in his discourse; he gave so just a measure of praise to the deceased; he touched with so much address all the passages where a greater degree of delicacy was required; he placed in so just a light all that was most to be admired; he employed all the

† Charlota de Seguiet, his daughter; married 1st. to Maximilian de Bethune, Duke de Sully; 2dly. to Henry de Bourbon, Duke de Verneuil.

§ Julius Mascaron Bishop of Tulle, a celebrated preacher.

the charms of expression, all the masterly strokes of eloquence with so much justness and so much gracefulness, that every one present, I say, every one without exception, broke out into applauses, charmed with so perfect, so finished a performance. He is a man of twenty-eight years of age, an intimate friend of M. de Tulle, who accompanied him when he left the assembly. We were for naming him the Chevalier Mascaron, and concluded he had spoke in the person of his friend. The musick was fine beyond expression. Baptiste § exerted his utmost effort, and was assisted by all the King's musicians. There was an addition made to that fine Miserere ; and there was a Libera, which filled the eyes of the whole assembly with tears : we can scarce conceive that there can be heard in heaven a nobler harmony. There were several prelates there : I desired Guittaut to look for the good Bishop of Marseilles, but we could not see him. I whispered to him, that if it had been the Funeral Oration of any person living, to whom he might have made his court by it, he would not have failed to grace the assembly with his presence. This little pleasantry made us laugh, without any regard to the ceremony. My dear, what a strange kind of a Letter is this ? I fancy I have almost lost my senses ! What is all this pompous narration to you ? to speak seriously, I could propose no other end in it, but to satisfy my longing to tell you a fine tale.

The King is at Charleroi, and will make a pretty long stay there. There is no forage yet to be found, and his large equipage brings a famine with it wherever he goes. They are much embarrassed with taking the first step of this campaign. Guittaut shewed your Letter to me and the Abbe ; the burthen of it is very obliging († *Envoyez moi ma Mere*). My dear, how amiable you are ! and how agreeably do you justify the excessive tenderness I have for you ! Alas ! I think of nothing but beginning my journey ; leave the care of it to me : I will conduct every thing ; and if my aunt continues to spin out the poor remains of life to any great length, I shall certainly set out ; you are the only person in the world

§ Lully ; † Pray send my mother.

world who could induce me to resolve to leave her in so bad a condition. I am every moment thinking on the day when I shall part from hence, but I have not the courage to fix upon it. To-day my journey is concluded on; to-morrow I am irresolute. What you say, my dear, is very true; there are events in life, which are very disobliging. You beg me not to think of you in changing my house, and I beg you to believe that I think of nothing else; and that you are so dear to me, that you make the whole employment of my heart. I shall go to-morrow and lie in that agreeable apartment, where you may find a place without displacing me. Adieu, my dear, you are at present a traveller, exposed to the wide world; I fear your adventurous humour. I can neither trust to you, nor to M. de Grignan. It is, as you say, a strange thing to find one's self no nearer Paris than Aix, after having gone two hundred leagues; and at St. Pilon, after having clambered so high. There are in your Letters passages extremely pleasant, but sometimes there are sentences which escape you, as obscure as those of Tacitus. I fell upon this comparison myself, there is nothing more true. I embrace Grignan, and kiss his right cheek, beneath the little tufted mole.

LETTER CLV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 13 May, 1672.

IT is certain that the extream beauty of Livri, is capable of giving joy to my heart, if it was not overwhelmed with grief at the melancholy situation I see my poor aunt in; with a perpetual desire of setting out; and with the weakness of Madame de la Fayette; who after having been in the country for upwards of a month, taking every necessary precaution as she thought against her disorder, returned to all appearance as sound as a roach; when a day or two after her arrival, she was attacked with a fit of a double tertian: this has just brought her to death's door again, and cannot fail in the end of carrying her off. But this disorder of hers, violent as it is, does not shock me near so much as that of my aunt's: it is that which distracts me, by being a continual obstacle

to

to my darling intention. Thus spring, which gives new life to the whole creation, is no longer spring to me. *Alas! these beauties are not made for me*, is still the burden of my song; I got a person the other day to tell me what sort of a spring yours is, and whereabouts your nightingales perch to sing. I find there is nothing for them but rocks or frightful precipices of stone, or else orange-groves or olive-trees, and they don't like such bitter things: pr'ythee, my dear, tell me something to retrieve the honour of your country. I approve highly of the journey you are about to make. I am certain it must be very amusing; the noise of the guns has something in it that appears to suit extremely well with your grandeur and dignity: there is something romantic in being received thus like a princess wherever you go; indeed you want now and then a stranger or wandering Prince to grace your history; I fancy you have not many of them; however, this is a circumstance of no great importance: you must tell me who is to accompany you in this little jaunt. Mons. de Martel † has wrote hither, that he will receive you like a Queen of France. I cannot but mightily admire the General of the Gallies ‡, and his curious passion; he will not be much put to it to play the speechless and expiring lover; at least if he is such as you represent him, he may easily fall to pieces at his mistress's feet.

Monsieur de Turenne is set out from Charleroi, at the head of twenty thousand men; his destination is a secret. My son is still in Germany. It is certain, that we shall now be in continual apprehensions of hearing from the army. It is feared that De Ruyter §, whom you know to be the greatest commander living at sea, has engaged and defeated the Count d'Etrees in the Channel. We know very little news here: it is said the king has forbidden any to be written: however it is to be hoped he will not conceal his victories from us.

Since I began this letter, I have seen Marseilles*; he appears as mild as a lamb; we did not engage in any controversy; we talked of the wonders that Mr. d'Uzé

† General of the Marine at Toulon.

‡ Louis-Victor Rochechouart, Duke de Vivonne.

§ The Dutch Admiral.

* The bishop of Marseilles.

and I intended to perform, in order to bring about a good and lasting peace. I shall not easily support the return of Madame de Monaco, without bringing you with her; my good-natured disposition is not yet changed. I know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that la Marans dreads your return, as much as it is possible to dread any thing; and that she will leave no stone unturned to raise an obstacle to it: she cannot support your presence. If you will let me know a little more of the tricks that have been played you, I may perhaps be able to assist you with some lights to discover the authors of them. You are greatly obliged to Langlade; he is no *writer* indeed, but he shews himself your friend on every occasion: he has spoken wonders to M. de Marfeilles, and has puzzled him more than all the rest of your friends put together. M. Dirval is gone for Lyons, from whence he is to set out for Venice: his equipage was in high taste, and extremely brilliant. He says of you, *tanto t'odiara quanto t'amai* †; for he pretends that you have slighted him. Monsieur de Marillac* writes word home, that they shall set out the 10th on a grand expedition: Monsieur de Turenne is marched forwards at the head of 20,000 men.

L E T T E R C L V I.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 18 May, 1672.

YO U R relation of your journey, my sweet child, is most admirable; I think I am reading some pretty romance, the heroine of which is extremely dear to me, and I take the most lively interest in all her adventures. I cannot think but that this excursion must have been highly delightful to you; to walk at your ease in the most enchanted spot imaginable; to be surrounded with all the agreeable odours of nature; to be treated like a queen wherever you came: this little passage of your life, so extraordinary, so entirely new, and at the same time so entertaining, could not fail, I think, of giving you pleasure: I am sure you gave into it, and was amused; the thought of which gives me real satisfaction.

Depend

† I shall hate thee as much as I have loved thee.

* Son to the Duke de la Rochefaucault.

Depend upon it, my dear, I will see you at Grignan this summer: leave it to me, and I will bring it to bear, I warrant you. It is great presumption, indeed, to answer thus confidently for one's actions; but as it is still with a due deference to the will of the great disposer of all events, we may surely be allowed the liberty of exposing one's desires and intentions.

I shall take care and see Madame de Martel: the polite reception her husband gave you, requires no less at my hands. I receive all your little billets with the greatest pleasure; they have every one of them the stamp of the workman, which cannot fail of pleasing me. I frequently hear from my son: but, believe me, my heart is deeply afflicted by the thoughts of this war: his regiment is going to join the king's army.

It is thought we are going to besiege Maestricht. This siege is a little less frightful than the passage of the Iffel. We really tremble whenever we receive any letters from the army; but it will be much worse a fortnight hence. M. de la R. F. and I mutually afflict and comfort each other. He has three or four sons there that are very dear to him.

Mad. la Marans came yesterday to Mad. de la Fayette's: she looked as gloomy as if she had made a compact with the devil, and the fatal day was approaching. She certainly has a profound grief for some officer, who has left her without the least regret*. Mad. de la Fayette desires me to tell you, that though she never enjoys her health, she is not at all the more reconciled to death; but the contrary. For my part, I own there are a great many disagreeable things in life; but yet I am not so far out of conceit with it, as your philosophy seems to enjoin: you will find it a hard matter, my dear child, to get this fanciful love of life out of your mother's head.

You will have heard news of Mons. de Coulanges from himself †, and how he has seen Mons. de Vivonne in his way, and how they pass their lives very tranquil and pleasantly with the Marquis de Villeroi. My poor aunt continues very bad, and is a spectacle to pierce every

* Mons. le Duc, afterwards Mons. le Prince.

† Mons. and Mad. de Coulanges were at that time at Lyons:

every heart with grief. Our abbe embraces you, la Mouffe honours you, and both intend to see your province; as for me, I want to see you only, and what is more, to see you, and see you for ever. Your president de Bouc visits me sometimes: he is an honest man, but I believe he never was concerned in a plot. I do not know when you will have a first president; I believe few, except those of Provence, are desirous of that place. Mad. de Coesquen has had the measles. Mad. de Sulli is gone to Sulli with her husband: Mad. de Verneuil is at Roui with hers: Mad. de Castelnau is with Mad. de Louvigni; and the Marshal's lady is by herself, like a turtle mourning her absent mate. D'Hacqueville is going into Brittany; if you want any more news apply to him: for our parts, we are so dull and languid, that life is quite tasteless to us. It is thought that we have invested Maestricht; but we hear nothing certain as yet.

LETTER CLVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 20 May, 1672.

IT is to no purpose to take care of one's self, while there are persons who are dear to one, and stand in need of our assistance: we sympathize in all their feelings; their troubles and uneasinesses become our own; and, in short, all the pleasures of our own lives are buried in their want of them, and one must be mad to continue to love it. I may say the same thing of health; I have doubtless a great share of, but it is of no other service to me, than to enable me to wait upon those who have it not: that wicked fever has made another attack upon poor la Fayette, and my aunt grows worse and worse every day: when I leave her I go to la Fayette, and from her I return again to my aunt: neither Livri, nor its pleasing walks, nor my sweet little house, any longer amuse me, and yet I must run to Livri for a moment, for I can no longer hold up my head.

I have seen Mad. de Martel at her own house, and said every thing to her that you may think. Her husband has written her wonders on your beauty and good-breeding; he gives you the greatest praises; she brought me

me the letter to shew it to me : I visited her afterwards, and so quitted all your scores. Nothing could be more agreeably romantick than your sea festivals, and your entertainments in the Royal Lewis, that famous ship. The real Lewis is in full march with all his army. The letters from thence say nothing positive, for every one is kept in ignorance of the place they are designed for. Maestricht is now out of the question. It is reported that they are going to possess themselves of three places, one on the Rhine, another on the Issel, and a third immediately afterwards. I will acquaint you with their names when I know them myself. Nothing can be more confused than the accounts we have from the army : every one is in the dark ; and it was but the other day that a person of a very considerable rank * wrote thus to one of his friends : “ I should be glad “ if you would inform me in your next whither we are “ going, and if we are to pass the Issel, or lay siege to “ Maestricht.” So that you may perceive what lights we are like to have : I assure you all this secrecy makes one’s heart ache. You are happy in having your husband all to yourself, safe and sound, and liable to no other fatigue than that of having your ugly face to look at all day in a litter. Poor man, he had reason indeed to get on horseback sometimes, to avoid the continuance of so disagreeable a sight ! For how was there any bearing to look at it for so long a time ? Alas ! I remember when coming from Brittany once, you sat over-against me during the whole journey ; and what pleasure did I not feel in constantly looking on that lovely face ? It is true indeed we were in a coach ; certainly then there must be some particular curse laid upon litters†.

Mad. du Pui-du-Fou will not suffer me to bring my little girl with me : she says it is running a great risk ; and that silences me. I would not willingly put her little ladyship’s person in danger, for I love her most sincerely. I have had her hair cut and dressed in the fashion : she is altogether a sweet creature ; she says and
does

* Monsieur le Duc.

† It is confidently asserted, that if two persons, the most fond of each other, were to take a long journey together in a litter, it would make them hate one another’s company most heartily.

does a thousand things surprising in a child of her age. In short, I divert myself with her for whole hours together: I would not for the world love her less. You know I told you the other day that I could not conceive how one could do otherwise than love one's daughter.

LETTER CLVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 23 May, 1672.

MY little friend was not at the post-office yesterday when the post came in, so that I had no letters brought me: they are about town by this time, so that I am every moment in expectation of them. This disappointment has vexed me; however I will have a little chat with you in the mean while. I saw Mons. de Marignan this morning, whom I mistook for Mons. de Maillanes. This confounded me a little at first; however, in order to get out of it as soon as possible, I begged of him to explain those two names to me*, which he did with the greatest readiness and good-nature imaginable: he easily allowed for my mistake, and set me to rights presently. He is vastly pleased with me, and I am vastly pleased with him. He has seen your little girl: he tells me your son is as handsome as an angel, and yourself as two.

I dined yesterday at la Troche's with the Abbe Arnauld, and Madame de Valentinois. After dinner we had le Camus, his son, and Itier; they made up a most exquisite little concert. After this arrived Mademoiselle de Grignan with her gentleman, that is Beaulieu; her governess Helene, her woman Mary, little page Jaquot, her nurse's son, and her nurse Jeanne in her Sunday cloaths; she is the neatest countrywoman I have ever seen. This little troop made a pretty appearance, we looked on them with pleasure, and made them pass on into the garden; I was charmed with the procession from the nursery.

But, my dear, we think of setting out from Paris. One day we were saying, the abbe and I, let us go; my

* This alludes to Mad. de Sevigne's natural forgetfulness of persons and names, of which she herself takes notice in former letters.

my aunt will hold out till autumn. This was resolved on. The next day we thought her so extremely weak, that we said one to another, we must not think of going; it would be barbarous; the next full moon will carry her off. Thus we pass on from day to day, despairing to come to any resolution. You easily comprehend the state we are in; it is excessively uneasy. What makes me most with myself in Provence is, that I may be sincerely afflicted for the loss of a person who has been always dear to me: I find that if I stay here, the liberty she will give me will take off some part of my tenderness, and my natural goodness of temper. Do not you admire the unaccountable disposition of things in this world, and the unexpected manner in which events often cross our way? All that is certain is, that in whatever manner it be, we are resolved upon going to Grignan this summer. Leave to us the care of getting over this unhappy difficulty as we can; and be assured, that the abbe and I are more inclined to break through a point of decency, by going hence too soon, than to violate the amity we have for you, by staying here without necessity. Adieu, my dear: It is needless to say I love you; you must assuredly believe it, and you need not fear believing it too much.

LETTER CLIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 30 May, 1672.

I HAD no letter from you yesterday, my dear child: your journey to Monaco had put you quite out of sorts: I was afraid of some such accident. I now send you news from M. de Pomponne: the fashion of being wounded is begun already: my heart is very heavy with the fears of this campaign. My son writes by every opportunity; he is hitherto in good health.

My aunt is still in a deplorable condition, and yet we have the courage to think of appointing a day for parting hence, assuming a hope which in reality we cannot entertain. I cannot yet forbear thinking there are certain things not ranged in good order, among the various events of life; they are, as it were, rugged stones lying across our way, too unwieldy to be re-

moved, and which we must get over as we can, though it is not without pain and difficulty.

We have a very tragical history to communicate to you from Livri. Do you remember that pretended devote, who walked so steadily without turning his head, that you would have thought he was carrying a vessel full of water? His devotion has turned his brain. One night he gave himself five or six stabs with a knife, and fell on his knees in his cell, all naked, and weltering in his blood. They come in, and find him in this posture. Good God! Brother, what have you done! Who has left you in such a condition; He replies very calmly, Father, I am doing a little penance. He faints away; they lay him on a bed; they dress his wounds, which are found very dangerous; he is recovered with much difficulty, and sent to his friends.

If you do not think such a head sufficiently disordered, tell me so, and you shall have, instead of it, that of Madame Paul*, who is fallen desperately in love with a great booby, whom she had taken to be her gardener. This lady has managed her affairs admirably; she has married him. The fellow is a mere brute, and has not common sense; he will beat her soon, he has already threatened to do it; no matter, she was resolved to have him. I have never seen so violent a passion; there is all the fine extravagance of sentiments imaginable, were they but rightly applied: it is like a rough sketch of an ill painting; all the colours are there, they want only to be properly disposed. I am extremely diverted with the caprices of love; but really I tremble for myself, when I reflect on such an attempt as this. What insolence was it in this passion, to attack Madame Paul, that is, to attack rigid, austere, antiquated virtue herself in person? Alas! where can we hope to find security? This is a pleasant piece of news indeed, after the agreeable relations you have given us. I beg you not to forget Mr. d'Harouis, whose heart is a master-piece of perfection, and who adores you. I am very impatient to hear of you and your little son. The weather must be extremely hot in the climate you are in; I fear this season for him, and for you much more; for I have
never

* Widow to the gardener at Livri.

never yet had any reason to think it possible to love any thing besides, in an equal degree with you.

* L E T T E R CLX.

To the Same.

Livri, Thursday 2 June, 1672.

WELL, I have received it at last, the dear, the excellent volume: never sure did I read any thing so diverting, so well wrote, and so interesting at the same time. I cannot sufficiently express my obligation to you, my dear child, for the kind trouble you have given yourself, and the regularity and exactness of your dates: I find there for certain that one of my letters are lost, but it does not much signify; those of consequence reached you, and I am easy about the rest. You seem very well pleased with this minister, and I am persuaded you will never have occasion to be otherwise. You will easily perceive I am talking of the great Pomponne, and it was to know what I said about him, I suppose, that some people were curious enough to intercept my letter: but I accuse no one, for I cannot conceive who could be guilty of so dirty a theft; there can be no great taste to gratify in letters between two persons so nearly related as we are: it is a thousand to one if there be any thing agreeable in them; it very rarely happens so. However, done it is, and without my being able to imagine by whom. God preserve you, my dear, from ever sustaining a greater loss.

We know nothing about la Marans, nor what kind of life she leads in her retirement; but Mad. de la Fayette will write you some of her fine fancies as soon as she is able to do it. We think we have discovered somewhat like an episode of a young prince, through all that profusion of grief which she shewed lately; and a few words of yours, which we have picked up by the way, serve to confirm us in this notion. I only just hint our nonsensical notions to you, and will explain them more at large. But, a propos, of explaining; you have sufficiently explained to me the perils and dangers you have been in during your voyage: for my part I cannot comprehend them; that is, I cannot comprehend how people can expose themselves to such: I

had much rather go upon one of the present expeditions: I could better meet death in the ardour of fight, spurred on by emulation and the noise of drums and trumpets, than to sit and see two large waves bidding for my life, and threatening me at every instant with destruction. And then again, on the other hand, your Alps, where the path is scarcely so broad as your litter, so that your life depends entirely on the sure-footedness of your mules! Indeed, child, the thoughts of these things make me tremble from head to foot: my service to that country, I will never go there while I live. Why, Madam de Monaco never had a lover in her life that would have ventured thus much for her. What you say about the *first* and the *last* is admirable; it is truly epigrammatical.

Had you not a little talk about MADAME *? Is she pretty well reconciled now to the loss of her? Is she very lame †? Is she not very much mortified to see herself on that side the Alps? Has she not a design of returning to Paris if possible? I pretty well guess what joy she had in seeing you: your conversations were doubtless without end, and she could never sufficiently express her obligations to you for such a visit. It is true she returned it very speedily, but it was not attended with the same circumstances. You speak of the princess d'Harcourt ‡ in a very pleasant manner. Brancas is very much disturbed; I don't know about what: he is a volunteer in the army; and as he is out of humour at a thousand things, he will not matter to muse or drop asleep just in the mouth of a cannon: he knows no other way of getting rid of the misfortunes he labours under. He wrote the other day to Mad. de Villars and me: the superscription was to *Mad. de Villars at Madrid*, Mad. de Villars, who is acquainted with his ways ||, opened the letter, and the first

* Madame de Monaco was the chief favourite of MADAME, (Henrietta-Anne of England, sister to Charles II.) who died June 29, 1670.

† By a bleeding badly performed.

‡ Frances de Brancas, mentioned in the 153d letter.

|| The count de Brancas is the same whom la Bruyere intended to represent under the name of Megalcas, in his treatise on the Memoirs of the Age.

first words she found were *my dear girls*. We have not answered as yet. You say I never make mention of your brother: indeed I can't tell the reason of it, for I am sure I am thinking of him every moment, and labour under the greatest uneasiness about him: I am very fond of him, and he behaves towards me in the most charming manner, and his letters are wrote in such a stile, that whoever should find them in my desk after my death, would think they were wrote by one of the soberest young fellows of the age he lived in. This same war gives me the greatest concern. My son is at present in the king's army; that is, in the lion's jaw as well as the others.

We shall not be long without hearing news, and great ones too: one's heart flutters with apprehension in the mean time. The Marquis de Castelnau has the small-pox. It was reported yesterday that Desmarais, son to the Grand Falconner, and Bouligneux, were dead lately of some disorder; if I do not contradict this in the letter I shall send you to-morrow from Paris, you may depend on it for truth. Master Paul's widow, poor woman, is really gone mad; there has been a stop put to her wedding; her great booby of a lover cares no longer for her, but thinks Molly * very pretty and very sweet tempered. But, in short, my account is not worth a farthing: I should have gained your love for ever, could I have contrived to have hidden you somewhere, that you might have seen and overheard all that passed. It was a mere tragi-comical romance. Nothing was heard but darts, flames, furies, desperation, and love. Methinks I see one of these little loves, who are so beautifully described in the prologue of *Aminta*, as concealing themselves in the woods: I fancy it was one of these that took mark at poor Molly; but as the best may be mistaken, so he shot the poor gardener's relict: be that as it will, the wound is incurable. Were you but here, you would be extremely diverted at this odd adventure, and at the overgrown clown that is the hero of the piece. I assure you I have my hands full, and am obliged to take Molly off with me, to prevent her from transplanting her nother.

* The daughter of Mad. Paul.

Ah, these poor mothers! how they are to be pitied, my dear.

My thoughts are constantly employed on the means of coming to you. I shall leave my poor aunt half dead; that is a cruel circumstance, it stings me to the soul; and then I shall be in a continual apprehension for my son's safety. Ah! how truly this favours of the world! You say that one must not use one's self to wish any thing; you may add, nor to be perfectly contented; that is a state not reserved for mortals.

You are returned to Grignan again, my dear: well, stay there till I come and fetch you away. Our dear abbe thinks just as I do, and so does la Mousse. You never in your life had a little party set out towards you with greater joy and alacrity. Adieu, my dearest, till to-morrow, when I shall write to you from Paris, if only two lines. I am now going to amuse myself with a walk in these delightful allies where I have seen you so many thousand times, and where I shall most infallibly think of you.

To Monsieur DE GRIGNAN.

YOU flatter me too much, my dear count; I shall accept of but one part of your fine speeches, and that is the thanks you return me for having given you a wife that makes all the joy of your life: as for that indeed, I think I contributed a little towards it; but for the authority you have acquired over her since you have had her in Provence, it has been wholly owing to your own person, merit, birth, and behaviour, and does not in the least proceed from me. Ah! how much you lose by not having my heart at ease. Le Camus has taken a friendship for me; he tells me that I sing his airs extremely well: he certainly composes most divinely; but I am so dull and woe-begone, that I can learn nothing; you would sing them like an angel: I assure you le Camus has an high opinion both of your voice and judgment. You have given my daughter one of the most delightful journies in the world; she is quite enchanted with it; but then you have dragged her over hills and dales, and exposed her to the dangers of those fruitful Alps, and the rough waves of the Mediter-

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. 31

Mediterranean: in short I have a month's mind to chide you for it; but in the first place let me embrace you most affectionately.

L B T T E R CLXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 3 June, 1672.

HERE am I got back to Paris, where I find our two gentlemen* are not so dead as they were said to be yesterday. Marshal Villeroi's lady is at the point of death. I know nothing about the army.

L E T T E R CLXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 6 June, 1672.

AS I received no letters from you yesterday, which cannot fail of giving me uneasiness, I imagined that you might be taken up with receiving Mad. de Monaco's visit; what comforts me most is, that you are in a place where you may plant cabbages, and are no longer exposed to waves and precipices. I have been under terrible apprehensions, in reflecting on the dangers of your voyage. My aunt has this day received the Viaticum once more, believing she was immediately entering on her's, to which she applied herself with an angelical devotion. Her preparation, her patience, her resignation, are things so much above nature, that they deserve to be considered as so many miracles, wrought to confirm us in our religion: she is entirely disengaged from the earth; her present state, though infinitely painful, is the thing in the world the most desirable to those who are truly Christians. She insists upon our taking our proposed journey, as I have already told you; we design to obey her; but nevertheless we sometimes apprehend that she will go before us. In a word, we have fixed upon the day; and if I had not for some time been accustomed not to do what I desire, I should give you notice not to write to me any more: but this I dare not venture to do: for I love your letters so well, that I had rather receive them at Grignan, than fail of them here.

* Desmarais and Bouligneux, mentioned in the preceding letter.

You know the marshal de Villeroi has left Lyons and Madame de Coulanges, to go, like the knight of the black armour, into the army of the Elector of Cologne, that he may have the honour of serving the king at least in the army of his allies. There are different opinions on it, whether he has done well or ill. The king does not love to be disobeyed, yet he may perhaps approve this martial ardor; the success will shew how we ought to judge of it.

You have had the comedians with you: I dare answer for it, that in what manner soever your theatre was furnished, it was still better than that of Paris. I inquired about it the other day, as I was amusing myself with Beaulieu; Madame, said he, there are none but apprentices now who frequent plays; you do not see there so much as a page or a footman; every body is in the army. If a man appears in the streets with a sword by his side, the little children hoot at him as he passes along. Such is the face of Paris at present; but it will make another appearance in a few months.

You say pleasantly, that you fear you should rob me of something, by polishing your letters: take care I beseech you, and do not give them a second touch, or you will make them perfect pieces of eloquence. That pure nature you describe, is precisely what is good, and what pleases beyond every thing. Keep your own amiable wit, without debasing it by any foreign mixture. If there are eyes more sharp or more piercing than yours, yet none could be more becoming in that lovely system of features where they shine with such a pleasing lustre.

I shall send you word that I am setting out at a time when you least think of it. Madame de Villeroi * is grown better. There is no better news than what I send you: I always inquire after news, and every one takes a pleasure in telling it me, because they know I do not inquire for myself. I am in pain, my dear, about the symptoms your fever has left behind it. It is impossible for me not to wish for to-morrow, that I might hear from you. I embrace you with an extreme tenderness.

LET-

* Magdalen de Crequi.

LETTER CLXIII.

To-the Same.

Paris, Monday 13 June, 1672.

HERE is a letter of my son's, which will divert you. You will be pleased with the accounts he gives us of what passes in the army. You will see that the king is so perfectly happy, that for the future he will only need to say what he desires to have done in Europe, without being at the trouble of going himself at the head of his army : and every one will think themselves happy in obeying his orders. I am well assured he will pass the Iffel with as much ease as he can pass the Seine. Terror every where prepares the way for victory ; the joy of all the courtiers is a good augury. Brancas writes, that they laugh without ceasing from morning till night. Here is a little history that I must transmit to you.

Immediately upon the death of the old Bourdeille, Mr. de Montausier writ to the king, to ask the place of Senechal of Poictou for Mr. de Lauriere his brother-in-law : the king granted it him. A little after the young Matas demanded it, and told the king, that this charge had been a long time in their family. The king writ to Mr. de Montausier, and desired him to give up this post, and promised to give up some other thing to Mr. de Lauriere. Mr. de Montausier writ back to his majesty, that, for his part, he should be extremely glad to have it in his power to yield it up ; but that his brother-in-law having already received the compliments of the province, it was impossible ; and that his majesty might provide in some other manner for the young Matas. The king was piqued at this, and bit his lips : Well, said he, I leave it to him for three years ; but after that I give it to the young Matas, with whom it shall always remain. This accident is very unfortunate for Mr. de Montausier.

I should have writ this to Mr. de Grignan, but it is the same thing ; these two letters are writ equally to you both, and are not equivalent to one good one. You will not have one of Provence for a first president ; I am well assured of it. The bishop of Marseilles came

to see me yesterday, with the Marquis de Vence, and two deputies; I thought he had been going to make me a harangue. Adieu, my dear; this is a very impertinent letter; I should do well to sleep, and recover my senses.

LETTER CLXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 17 June, 1672, past 11 o'clock at night.

I HAD but just sent away my last packet when I heard a melancholy piece of news, the particulars of which I cannot give you, because I am not yet informed of them; all that I have heard is, that Mr. de Longueville was killed in passing the Issel* under the command of the prince. We are oppressed with grief at this ill news. We were at Madame de Fayette's, with Mr. de la Rochefoucault, when we first heard of it. At the same time we were told, that Mr. de Marillac† died of his wound. This storm fell on him in my presence; he was deeply afflicted with it; his tears flowed from his heart, but his firmness of mind prevented any unmanly expression of grief.

After hearing such news, I had not the patience to inquire any farther. I flew to Mr. de Pomponne's, who reminded me that my son was in the king's army, which had no part in this action; it was reserved for the prince, who passed the river and repassed it twice or thrice in a little boat, with an heroick sedateness of soul; giving his orders every where with that divine courage, for which we all so much admire him, notwithstanding he had received a wound in his hand. It is said that Guitri and Nogenet were drowned, that Mr. de Marillac was wounded with a musket-shot in the shoulder, and in the cheek, but the bone is not hurt. After this first difficulty they find no more enemies; they are all retired into their fastnesses. Adieu, my dear; my mind is under some disturbance. Though my son be in the king's army, there are so many opportunities of signalising his valour, that it makes me die with fear.

LETTER

* In passing the Rhine it should be, for the Issel was abandoned.

† Two sons of M. de la Rochefoucault.

LETTER CLXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 20 June, 1672.

I CANNOT reflect upon the condition you have been in, without feeling myself greatly affected; and though I know that you are out of danger, Heaven be praised for it! yet I cannot turn my eyes on what is past, wit out a horror that distracts me. Alas! how much was I in the dark about a health that was so dear to me! If any one had told me at that time, that my daughter was in greater danger than if she had been in the army; how little should I have believed it! Must I suffer this grief when my heart is a prey to so many other distresses! The extreme danger my son is in; the war, which rages every day with greater violence; the couriers, who bring no other news but the death of some friend or acquaintance, and may bring us accounts yet more fatal; the fear of hearing ill news, and yet the curiosity of inquiring after it; the desolation of those who are in all the excess of grief, and with whom I pass a great part of my life; the strange state of health my aunt lies under, and my extreme desire of seeing you; all this afflicts and consumes me, and forces me to lead a life so contrary to my inclination, that I have need of a great stock of health to support it.

You have never seen Paris in such a condition as it is now in; all the world is in tears, or fears to be so. The poor unfortunate Nogent is beside herself. Madame de Longueville pierces every heart with her complaints. I have not seen her indeed, but this is what I have heard. Mademoiselle de Vertus returned two days since from Port-Royal, where she usually resides. They sent for her and Mr. Arnaud to impart this terrible news. The very sight of Mademoiselle de Vertus was sufficient; her sudden return was too sure a sign that some fatal accident had happened. In effect, as soon as she appeared—Ah! Mademoiselle, how is it with my brother †? She did not dare, even in thought, to make any further demand. Madam, he is recovered of his wound—there has been a battle—And my son?—They answered her nothing.

† Lewis de Bourbon, Prince of Conde.

Nothing. Ah! Mademoiselle, my son, my dear child! answer me; Was he killed on the spot? Had he not one little moment? Ah, my God! what a sacrifice is this! Upon this she threw herself on her bed, and by expressions of the most lively sorrow, dictated by faintings, by convulsions, by a silence of mortal despair, by stifled cries, by sudden bursts of passion, by floods of bitter tears, by eyes up-lifted to Heaven, and by tender piteous plaints, she passed through all the extremes of grief. She sees a few friends; and in pure submission to Providence, consents to receive from them such nourishment as is just sufficient to keep life and soul together. She takes no rest; her health, before in a declining state, is visibly altered for the worse. For my part, I think her death is to be wished, as I cannot think she can survive such a loss. There is a certain gentleman* who is not in a much better condition: I cannot forbear thinking, that if they had met, in the first moments of their grief, and had been alone together, all other sentiments had given place to sighs and tears, redoubled without intermission; there had been a dumb scene of sorrow, a dialogue of inarticulate sighs and groans. This is a notion of my own. But, my dear, how great an affliction is this. His very mistresses do not constrain themselves; his poor domesticks are disconsolate; and his gentleman, who came yesterday with the ill news, scarce appears a reasonable creature. This death effaces the thoughts of all others.

A courier, who arrived yesterday, brings an account of the death of the Count du Plessis†, who was killed by a cannon shot, as he was giving directions for making a bridge. Arnheim is besieged by M. Turenne. They did not attack the fort of Skeing, as it was defended by eight thousand men. Alas! these successful beginnings will be followed with a tragical end for a great number of families. May Heaven preserve my son! He was not upon this expedition: if there be any thing good in such a hazardous profession, it is the having such a post as he has.

In

* Mr. de la Rochefoucault.

† Alexander de Choiseul, Count du Plessis, son to Cesar de Choiseul, Marshal of France.

In the midst of our afflictions, the description you have given me of Madame Colonna and her sister †, is something divine; it inspires an air of joy and gaiety under the most melancholy circumstances: it is an admirable picture. The Countess de Soissons, and Madame de Bouillon *, are downright angry with these indiscreets; they say they ought to be confined; they declare loudly against this extravagant folly. It is not thought that the king will disoblige the Constable § (Colonna) who is certainly one of the greatest men in Rome. In the mean time we are in expectation of seeing her arrive here like Mademoiselle de l'Etoile ¶; this comparison is admirable.

These are the best accounts I have to give you; you will find by all those you receive, that Mr. de Longueville has been the cause of his own death, and of the death of several others; and that the prince has shewed himself through the whole of this expedition, rather like a father, than the general of an army. I said yesterday, and others came into my sentiments, that if the war continues, the duke † will certainly occasion the death of the prince; his love for him surpasses every other passion.

La Marans affects to appear oppressed with grief. She says that she sees very plainly there is something in the news from the army, which is concealed from her; and that her interests are blended with those of the prince, the duke, and Mr. de Longueville. She conjures people, by all that is sacred, to speak out, and not to spare her; and tells them, that in her deplorable condition, it is in vain to hide any thing from her. If it were possible for us to laugh in these circumstances, we should laugh at her. Alas! if she knew how little any of us think of concealing any thing from her, and how much every one is taken up with their own griefs and fears, she would not have the vanity to believe we had so much attention to deceive her.

The

† Hortensia Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin.

* These two ladies were sisters to Mesdames de Colonna and Mazarin.

§ The father of these ladies, and one of the most powerful families in Rome.

¶ In Scarron's comical romance.

† Henry Juliers de Bourbon, son to the prince.

The news I send you comes from a good hand ; I have it from Gourville, who was with Madame de Longueville when she heard of her son's death. All the couriers come directly to him. Mr. de Longueville had made his will before he parted from hence. He leaves a great part of his estate to a son he has, who, as I believe, will take the title of the Chevalier d'Orleans †. Do you know how they disposed of the body of Mr. de Longueville ? They laid it in the same boat in which he passed the river. Within two hours after, the prince, touched with a sensible grief, ordered him to be brought into his tent, and covered with a cloak. The prince was wounded himself, and several others, so that their return from this attack was the most melancholy thing in the world. They are all together in a town on this side the Rhine, which they passed to get their wounds dressed. They say the Chevalier de Monchevreuil, who was of the same party with Mr. de Longueville, did not come with them ; but that they were binding up a wound which he received as he stood next to him.

I have received a letter from my son : he was not in this expedition, but he is to be in another. What security can be looked for in such a profession ? He is extremely concerned about Mr. de Longueville. I advise you to write to Mr. de la Rochefoucault, on the death of his Chevalier, and on the wound of Mr. de Marsillac. I have seen his heart unveiled on this cruel accident : he is of the first rank of all that I have ever seen, for constancy, worth, tenderness, and good sense ; qualities which infinitely surpass even his entertaining wit, and extreme pleasantry of humour. I will not amuse myself at present with telling you how well I love you. I embrace Mr. de Grignan, and the Coadjutor.

** The same evening at 10 o'clock.*

IT is two hours since I made up my packet ; and on my return to town *, I found a letter for me, with the news that a peace was concluded with Holland. It may

† He appeared under the name of the Chevalier de Longueville, and was accidentally killed at Philipsbourg in 1688 by a soldier, who was shooting at a snipe.

* From the Fauxbourg St. Germain, where Mad. de Sevigne used always to go to shew her letters to M. de la R. F. and Mad. de la Fayette, before she sent them away.

may easily be imagined that the Dutch are in the greatest consternation, and glad to submit to any terms: the king's good-fortune is beyond all that has been ever seen. We shall once more breathe again; but what a cruel addition must this be to the grief of Mad. de Longueville, and all those who have lost children or near relations! I have seen Marshal du Plessis; he is greatly afflicted, but carries it off like a brave soldier. His lady † weeps bitterly; and the countess ‡ is greatly disconcerted at not being a duchess, and that is all. Ah, my dear child, only think, had it not been for the rashness of M. de Longueville, we had had all Holland, without losing a creature.

L E T T E R CLXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 24 June, 1672.

MY poor aunt seems now to be no longer in a condition to retard my departure for any time: in a word, every hour threatens to be her last. We cannot say absolutely how long she will hold out, but this I can assure you, that unless you send to forbid our coming to you, we shall set about it very speedily. Leave us then to manage; you know how I hate self-condemnation; how I could never be at ease was I to leave my aunt without paying the last duties to her.

It does not appear that peace is so near being concluded as I supposed it to be in my last letter; but every thing goes on so smoothly, and there appears such a disposition of obedience, such a readiness to submit on the side of the enemy, that the king has nothing to do but present himself before the gates of a town, and it is given up directly. Had it not been for the rash bravery of M. de Longueville, which was the cause of his death, and that of many others, every thing would have succeeded to our wish: but indeed, all Holland together cannot compensate for the loss of such a prince. All our friends are in good health as yet. Little la Troche was one of the first who took the flood; he has been distinguished for it. If I am still here when you write, take notice

† Columba de Charron.

‡ Maria-Louisa le Loup de Bellenave.

notice of this gallant action to his mother ; it will please. Our abbe has been under great concern about your disorder ; he makes you his compliments on your recovery : you must say something very kind and tender to him, to keep up his spirits under the great anxiety he has to be with you. You are now at Grignan. I hope I shall be there in my turn as well as others. Alas ! I am ready on my side, I am really surpris'd at my own ill fortune ; it is enough for me to wish a thing to find some obstruction to it. I am greatly satisfied with the tender care and friendship of the Coadjutor, but I will not write to him ; he will love me the better for that : however, I shall be overjoyed to see him, and have a little chat with him.

The Marquis de Villeroi is remanded back to Lyons. The king would not permit him to remain with M. de Munster. Jarze has had leave to stay and get broken bones. You know he was in exile as well as the marquis.

L E T T E R CLXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 27 June, 1672.

MY poor aunt received the extreme unction yesterday : you never beheld a more piteous spectacle ; she just breathes, and that is all I can say. I shall soon let you know farther. It is impossible not to be sensibly affected at so painful an exit in a person one so much honours and esteems. What you say upon that head is very just and rational, and I shall endeavour to follow your advice ; and when I have gained the victory, will let you know it, and share the triumph with you.

I have at length seen Mad. de Longueville. Chance placed me by her bedside : she made me draw nearer to her, and spoke to me first ; You know I never abound in words on these occasions. She said she did not doubt that I greatly pitied her condition, and but with justice, for her misfortune wanted nothing of being complete. She mentioned Mad. de la Fayette and Monsieur d' Hacqueville, as those of her friends whom she imagined would sympathize the most with her : she then began to talk of her son, and of the friendship that was between him and my son. I shall not trouble you
with

with my replies ; they were such as the nature of the conversation required ; and in fact I was so moved, that it was impossible to speak amiss. I was soon obliged to give place to the number of visitors ; but after all, when I put myself in the place of this unhappy lady, the concluding a peace just at this time appears the most stabbing circumstance that can be ; when I return to myself again, I bless Heaven for it, since it is the means of preserving me, my dear Sevigne, and the rest of our good friends.

You terrify me, my dear, with the fear of not being able to walk in your delightful gardens at Grignan, and of not having any pears or peaches left ; but, my sweet girl, I shall have you there, and when I am tired with counting the boards in the room, shall I not have your fine terrasses to walk on ? Will you not give me some dried figs and grapes, if I should not be fortunate enough to get to you in their season ? Say as you please, I shall very willingly expose myself to the dryness of the country, in full hopes of meeting it no where else. Only I foresee a little dispute that is likely to arise between us, and that is about your little boy, whom you will be for having me love better than my little wench here, which I am afraid is impossible, for I am engaged in so deep a love and value for this little creature, that really it is with the greatest regret that I think of leaving her behind.

Monf. de la R. F. is under great uneasiness about M. de Marillac's wound ; he is apprehensive lest it should terminate in a mortification. I don't know whether you should write to Mad. de Longueville or not, but I think you may. We have had a droll print handed about here upon the Dutch, There is an old countess, seemingly about 100 years of age, (which represents Holland, that has been a republick nearly so long) who appears very sick : she is attended by four physicians, which are the kings of England, Spain, France, and Sweden. The king of England desires her to shew him her tongue, and cries, Ah ! what a filthy tongue ! The king of France feels her pulse, and says, She must be bled plentifully. I do not remember what the rest say ; but, in short, it is on the whole a very just and pleasant satire.

I am

I am extremely glad you are not with child, for now you will be soon quit of all your other disorders. I have seen two or three Provencials, but I have forgot their names. However Provence is become very dear to me ; it has quite effaced my regard for Brittany and Burgundy : nay, I quite despise them.

L E T T E R CLXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 1 July, 1672.

AT length, child, our dear aunt has ended her wretched life. The poor woman has cost us an infinite number of tears ; you know how susceptible I am of grief, and how little I am a niggard of the drops of sympathy. She died yesterday morning about four o'clock ; she was found dead in her bed. The evening before she was extremely ill, and it was with difficulty we could keep life in her. At eleven o'clock she made me a sign to withdraw ; I kissed her poor cold hand ; she had then convulsions of the face and mouth ; she gave me her blessing, and I left the room. She then took a little milk to oblige Mademoiselle de la Trousse, but could not get it down. They then laid her down in the bed ; she made every body leave the room, saying she was going to sleep. About four in the morning word was brought to Mademoiselle de la Trousse that Madame was asleep ; upon which she ordered her not to be disturbed upon any account. At five she said she would go and see if she was still asleep : they went to the bedside, and there they found her dead. Upon which there followed such a scene ! It was with difficulty they could get her daughter disengaged from the corpse : however they made shift to carry her into another room. They next came to acquaint me, I immediately ran thither in the utmost distraction, and found my poor dear aunt cold and stiff, but laid so much at her ease, that I do not think she had experienced so easy a moment as that in which she expired for above six months. After I had paid my tribute of tears to this mournful sight, I went in quest of Mademoiselle, whom I found in a condition that might have melted the very stones. I brought her hither with me, and in the

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. 43

the evening Mad. de la Trouffe came and took my cousin home with her, from whence she purposes removing her to the family seat, till M. de la Trouffe's return. I am now ready to set out, having no longer any thing to retain me; and so, my dear, farewell. I have been promised some news; I am in expectation of it: think the king continues the chain of his conquests. But hark ye, Madam, you take not the least notice of the death of M. de Longueville, nor of the care and pains I have taken to supply you with intelligence: not a word about my letters! In short, I fancy I am writing to one deaf and dumb. But I see how it is; I must absolutely come to Grignan; your observance and good-nature is entirely worn out. Our abbe sends you a thousand good wishes; I perfectly adore him for his noble perseverance in making the journey to Provence.

LETTER CLXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Sunday 3 July, 1672.

I AM vexed, my dear child, at your losing one of my packets; as they were filled with news, it puts you out of the order of affairs, and breaks the thread of your knowledge of what passes. You must doubtless have had very exact relations, which may make you comprehend that the Iffel was ill defended. The great wonder is, our having passed it swimming. The prince and his Argonauts * were in a boat; and the first party of the enemies troops they fell in with on the other side the river, laid down their arms, and demanded quarter; but by misfortune, Mr. de Longueville, who doubtless did not hear it, hurried on by a warlike ardour, mounts his horse, which he led by a rein after him; and, ambitious of being the foremost, forces the barricade behind which they were entrenched, and kills the first man he met. At the same instant he himself received five or six wounds. Monsieur the duke follows him; Monsieur the prince follows his son, and all the rest follow the prince. This brought on a horrible

* The name given to the flower of the Grecian princes, who accompanied Jason to Colchos, in quest of the Golden Fleece.

horrible slaughter, which it is plain they would have avoided, had they known the enemies intention of yielding. But every thing is pre-ordained in the dispositions of Providence.

The Count de Guiche performed an action, the success of which has covered him with glory ; whereas had it miscarried, he would have been found highly criminal. He was sent to discover whether the river was fordable or not ; he gave his opinion that it was, tho' it is probable he well knew the contrary. Whole squadrons swam over on horseback, without breaking their ranks : it is true, he was himself at the head of them. This was never hazarded before ; it succeeds ; he surrounds the enemy's troops, and forces them to yield. You see that his fortune and his valour kept pace with each other. But you must doubtless have had very heroical relations of this daring adventure.

The Chevalier de Nantouillet fell from his horse into the river ; he immediately sunk to the bottom, but came again above water ; he sunk again, and appeared a second time above the stream : at last, he luckily meets with a horse's tail, and gets hold of it ; the horse brings him ashore, he mounts, he rushes into the thickest of the battle, he receives two shots in his hat, and comes off gay and victorious. An enchanted hero could not appear more careless and unconcerned : he puts me in mind of Orontes * prince of the Massagetes.

It is certainly true that Mr. de Longueville had been at confession before he parted from hence. As he never boasted of such things, he did not even acquaint his own mother with it ;—but it is found so true, that Mad. de Longueville can have no doubt of it. How great a consolation must this be to her ! He bestowed great sums in purposes of charity and liberality, which none knew of, and which were given on condition they should be kept secret. No human virtue was ever more solid than his : he wanted, in the common opinion, higher views, that is to say, pride, vanity, and haughtiness : but certainly none ever approached nearer to perfection. He was above praise ; if the world was
satisfied

* A hero in the romance of Cassandra.

satisfied with his conduct, that was enough for him. I frequently see persons who have not yet recovered from their concern for the loss of him; but, as for the generality, it is a thing already forgotten. This melancholy news was only matter of grief for three or four days; the regret of the publick for the loss of † MADAME continued much longer.

The particular interests every one has in what passes in the army, hinder them from giving much attention to the misfortunes of others. Since the first engagement, there has been no talk of any thing but cities surrendered, and of the arrival of deputies to desire the favour of being received amongst his majesty's newly-conquered subjects. Do not forget to write a line or two to la Troche, upon her son's having distinguished himself at the passage of the river: he had been commended in the presence of the king, as one of the forwardest in that adventurous action. There is no probability that the enemy will defend themselves against such a victorious army. The French are certainly very fine soldiers; every thing must yield to the noble rashness of their attempts. After this new proof of their success, no river can serve for a defence against their all-conquering valour*.

Adieu, my dearest child! Pardon the concern I have been under, for having been two posts without receiving any letters from you; I now expect only one more. Your letters are so agreeable, that the want of them can be recompensed by nothing but your presence.

L E T T E R CLXX.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 8 July, 1672.

WELL, my dear child, I think I see you at Grignan, waiting for me upon your bed. I, on my side, am in all the hurry of departure; and if I was to

† The Princess Henrietta Anne of England, Princess de Conti.

* This comes extremely well from the pen of a French lady; but, alas! how were these conquerors of the world in a very few years afterwards driven, like fearful pigeons, before a kite, by the victorious arms of that consummate general the duke of Marlborough!

to spend the whole day in thinking and writing, I should not see you a moment sooner: but I am just setting out; and if I should write you another letter from hence on Monday, you may be assured it is for the last time. I desire you will be very idle till I come, that you may not have the least bit of laziness left about you at my arrival. It is true that you and I think differently in some things; but then in most others, and those the principal ones, we are so much of the same mind, that we seemed as nearly allied by soul as by blood.

I have been at St. Maur to take my leave, but I had not the power to do it; for, without vanity, the delicacy of Mad. de la Fayette is such, that she cannot bear without emotion the loss of a friend like me; these are her words, not mine. I went thither with Mr. de la Rochefoucault, who shewed me the letter you writ to him, which is a very fine one: in his opinion, nobody writes better than you; I believe his taste will not be disputed. We had a great deal of discourse upon the road; at our return we met with Mr. de la Rochefoucault, and Gourville, who, by the stroke of a wand, made an admirable supper spring out of the ground for us. The next day, la Troche, and the abbe Arnauld came to visit me, and found me making up my packets.

My son has writ to me in a style, as if he had already seen the campaign happily ended, and was safely arrived at Grignan. He says that every thing has yielded an entire submission to the king, and that Grotius* is arrived at the camp, to conclude a treaty of peace. If he returns so soon as it is expected, my son intends to come to us at Grignan. He entertains me much with speaking of you; when you write to him, desire him to make us this agreeable visit.

There are a great number of ladies in tears for the death of Mr. de Longueville: they make the profession of grief due to so just an occasion ridiculous. They all of them affect to have conversations with Mr. de la Rochefoucault; but he, who fears acting a ridiculous part

* Ambassador from the States General to the court of France, and pensionary of Rotterdam.

part more than any thing in the world, has sent them to look for comforters elsewhere.

La Marans affects to appear oppressed with grief. It is ten months since she has seen her sister*; they are very ill together. She was there three days since in a mask; and without saying any thing to introduce the discourse, or so much as unmasking, though her sister immediately knew her, she burst into tears, and began thus: Dear sister, I am come to beg you to tell me, how you found yourself upon the death of your lover. Did you weep long? Were you utterly unable to sleep? Did you feel a perpetual heaviness at your heart? Was it not very cruel? How could you bear it? Did you admit of company? Were you not in a condition rather to amuse yourself with reading? Did you never go abroad? Dear! how melancholy it is! How can one support the thoughts of it? I leave you to imagine, what pretty passionate exclamations she made. Her sister made her such an answer as she thought proper; and flew to Mr. de la Rochefoucault to describe this pleasant scene to him, who would have laughed at it, if any thing had been capable of diverting him. For our parts, we all thought it a folly worthy of her, and not inferior to that fine adventure of her's, when we went to visit the good man Andilli, fancying him to be the Druid Adamas, to whom the shepherdesses of Lignon resorted to relate their amorous distresses, and to receive consolation from him. I thought this history could not fail to divert you as much as it did us.

De Castelnau is comforted for the loss of Mr. de Longueville; she has been told that he once said to Ninon, Pray Mademoiselle, cannot you deliver me from the persecution of this fat Marchioness de Castelnau? Upon this, she resumed her gaiety so far as to divert herself with dancing. As for the Marchioness d'Uxelles, her affliction is that of a true and hearty friend. The little son of Mr. de Longueville is the very same dear angel, of whom you have heard so much; it is one of the finest histories of our days. I believe you will not forget to write to my cousin de la Trouffe, whose grief and merit, with regard to the care she has taken of the mother

* Mademoiselle de Montalais.

mother of this little angel, is above the highest praises.

I know of no particular news : They still continue to assure us of the peace, and of the entire conquest of Holland.

LETTER CLXXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Sunday 10 July, 1672.

LET me entreat you, my dear, whatever others may say to you, to make the oil of scorpions*, that we may find the remedy with the disease. As for your gnats, I was talking of them the other day, when a Provencial assured me, that they were not the only troublesome things of the kind which you had at Grignan, for that there was one of another kind, which, without wounding you severely, did you infinitely more harm. Methinks you look now like Madame de Sotenville in the play ; for you will soon have work enough upon your hands to receive a troop, that will put your pigeon-house, farm-yard, warren, and all to work. But, my dear child, I only say this for want of something else to say ; for if I thought you killed a pigeon more on our accounts, I should be very angry with you. It will be the way to destroy our abbe to tempt him with varieties ; your usual table is more than sufficient. La Mouffe † has been a little staggered in his resolution with the apprehension of fleas, gnats, scorpions, bad roads, and the hurry he may happen to meet with ; all these have formed a train of hideous monsters in his poor brain, for which I have laughed at him very heartily ; and then to hear him cry, *What a figure I shall make ! Lord help me, I am no body ; I am not fit to appear in such a deal of company as we shall find there.* This is what you may call an insolent humility. D'Hacqueville is expected here soon, but he is not likely to meet with me. I have taken

care

* Scorpions are very common in Provence, and in most Parts of the South of France, especially in such places as have a low and marshy situation. The oil made from the fat of this insect is looked on as a sovereign remedy for its bite.

† This gentleman was to be of the party with Mad. de Sevigne and the Abbe de Coulanges, in their journey to Grignan.

care to have your compliments presented to Madame de Termes ; and why not ? M. de Vivonne is very ill of his wounds ; M. Marillac is very little better, and the prince is in a manner cured of his. I have no particular news. It is said that Nimeguen makes a shew of defending itself ; but it only serves for matter of laughter. Adieu, my dear child : but before I seal my letter, tell me, do you think I love you ? Ah, how much !

L E T T E R CLXXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 11 July, 1672.

NOT a word more about my journey : it is so long since we have talked on no other subject, that, in short, it is become quite tiresome. Do you know, my dear, that long expectation blunts joy, as a long continuance of a disease does the pain of it. You will absolutely have wasted all the pleasure you should take in seeing me, by waiting so long for it. I have been obliged to stay, and see the last duties paid to my poor aunt ; but now all is over, and Wednesday next I set out, if alive. I shall lie either at Elson or Melun. I intend to go by the way of Burgundy, but shall not stop at Dijon ; but must give a day or two to an old aunt that I do not care much for by the bye ; however, I will write to you from every place where it can be done ; I cannot pretend to fix the particular days. It is most heavenly weather. Our abbe is all joy and content ; la Mouffe is a little fearful of the length of the journey ; but I will keep up his spirits : as for my own part, I am overjoyed ; if you have the least doubt of it send me word so to Lyons, and I shall return as I came.

There ! my dear, I have no more to say to you, only that I have taken all imaginable precautions about my sweet little girl here. You must know I have taken her from Livri, notwithstanding my first resolution. She is a thousand times better here. She has already given me a proof that I did well, for since her return hither, she has had a pretty little slight small-pox, which was attended with little or no sickness. Pecquet put her out of danger in two visits, whereas had she been

at Livri, God knows how much trouble it might have cost us. If you have a mind to know whether I saw her during her illness, I shall in return assure you, that I did not quit her a moment during the time; I fear infection no more than you do precipices: in short, I now have her in full health, and in the midst of every kind of help in case of future accidents. Every one has approved of my bringing her back from Livri: so all is settled. Adieu, my lovely child. Pray is M. de Grignan willing to indulge me with the sight of his fine castle?

L E T T E R CLXXIII.

To the Same.

From Auxerre, Saturday 16 July, 1672.

WELL, my dear, here am I at last; I am still at a great distance from you, and yet I already feel the pleasure of being somewhat nearer to you. I set out on Wednesday from Paris, with the vexation of not having received any letters by Tuesday's post; but the hopes of seeing you, at the end of my long journey, keeps me in spirits. Every one was telling me in an agreeable manner that I should kill our abbe, in making him take a journey into Provence during the heat of summer; but he, good man, had the courage and resolution to laugh at these idle tales, and Heaven has rewarded him for it, by the finest weather that heart could wish; there is no dust; it is delightfully cool, and the days of an infinite length. What can be wished for more? Our Mousse begins to take heart: we travel mighty gravely. M. de Coulanges would have made us quite merry. We have found nothing worthy our reading but Virgil; not Virgil *travesti* I assure you, but Virgil * in all the majesty of Latin and Italian. To be completely merry, one must be with merry folks: you know my way; I am as other people are, but am never the first to begin. I am a little dull at not knowing how matters go in Holland; when I set out, they were between peace and war. This is the most

* Mad. de Sevine speaks here of a translation of the *Aeneid* into Italian verse by Hannibal Caro, who is almost the only one that has preserved the beauties of that noble author.

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. 31

most critical juncture that France has experienced for a considerable time, both with regard to publick and private interests.

Well, adieu, my dear child; I hope to meet with something from you at Lyons. Let me tell you, you are greatly obliged to our dear abbe and la Mouffe, but not in the least to me.

L E T T E R CLXXIV.

To the Same.

From Lyons, Wednesday 27 July, 1672.

IF this date does not please you, I know not what to do for you. I received two of your letters yesterday by Mad. de Rochebonnet. I never saw so surprising a likeness; in short it is M. Grignan himself, in the person of a most agreeable woman: she perfectly adores your ladyship. I shall not tell you how much I love her, nor how much you ought to love her. As to her brother-in-law*, at whose house I lodge while in this place, he is absolutely made to steal one's heart; such an ease, such a freedom reigns about him, as perfectly suits with my temper, and makes me charmed with him. The intendant ‡ with his lady, and Mad. de Coulanges, came to receive me at the boat; they made me go home to supper with them, and I dined there yesterday. They take me a walking; they show me every thing that is worthy curiosity: in short, they load me with civilities: I cannot conceive what it is that makes them shew me so much esteem. I would fain have set out tomorrow, but Mad. de Coulanges insisted upon another day, as the condition of her coming to Grignan: I readily acquiesced, as pretty sure that the bargain would be agreeable to you: so I shall not leave this place till Friday morning. Saturday about one o'clock in the afternoon I shall be at Robinett†, at least as the chamberlain tells me. If you leave me there, there I'll stay;

† Thereza Adhemar de Mopteuil, Countess de Rochebonne, sister to M. de Grignan.

* N. de Chateaufneuf, canon, count, and chamberier (or chamberlain) of the church of St. John of Lyons; brother to the late Count de Rochebonne, commandant for the king in the Lyonnais.

‡ M. du Gue, father to Mad. de Coulanges.

† A landing-place about two leagues distant from Grignan.

I'll not mention a word of my excessive joy. Our dear abbe is very well ; it is to him that all our compliments are due. La Mousse is alive yet. We wish to be with you every moment, and my heart flutters when I think of it.

My equipage came thus far without receiving any damage, but yesterday I had the misfortune to lose one of my horses, who was drowned at the watering-place. I have now no more than five, so that I am afraid I shall disgrace you by my entry ; but indeed, my dear, it is not my fault. I have had a great many compliments of condolance upon my loss, but I support it with an heroic patience. Madame de Coulanges advises me, by all means to stay and spend my summer here ; she says it is ridiculous to think of going any farther, and so would have me content myself with sending you a compliment. I wish you could hear her when she is saying all this. She will certainly come and see us, if it is only to raise your spirits. Adieu, my dearest child ; your little girl is very well ; she is at Paris, in the midst of help, and more visited and attended than I am. I am greatly pleased with my notion of leaving her there. But here comes Mad. Rochebonne ! I kiss her, and think I am kissing her brother § ; for which reason I shall send him no remembrance this time. Ah ! what a pleasure is it to be coming towards you, my dear countess.

L E T T E R CLXXV.

To the Same.

From Marseilles, Wednesday - - - 1672.

I SIT down to write to you, my dear, after having had a visit from Madame l'Intendante, and a most curious harangue. I am now expecting a present, and the present expects my pistole. I am enchanted with the extraordinary beauty of this town. Yesterday was a most heavenly day ; and the spot || from whence I had a view of the sea, the bastides, the hills, and the town itself, do altogether form an astonishing prospect. But what

§ M. de Grignan.

|| This place is, in the language of the country, called La Visite, and is greatly admired for the beauty of its prospect.

what delights me more than all the rest is Mad. de Montfuron* : she is really a lovely woman, and accordingly one loves her without hesitation. A crowd of cavaliers came here to receive M. de Grignan† at his arrival ; names that were known, and names that were unknown ; knights-errants, long-swords, smart cocked hats, a spice of war, of romance, of embarkations, adventurers, chains, slavery, captivity, and captives ; all this to one of so romantick a turn as I am, is inexpressibly delightful. M. de Marseilles came to pay us a visit yesterday in the evening, and to-day we are to dine with him. I tell you the affair is as good as done. It is abominable weather just now, my dear ; it makes me very dull : we can see neither the sea, the galleys, nor the harbour. With all due respect to Aix, Marseilles is very pretty, and is better peopled than Paris : there are at least a hundred thousand souls in it ; how many *fine* ones there are I cannot pretend to tell you, for really I have not time nor leisure to attend to the calculation. The air in general is too thick and gross, so that upon the whole I had rather be with you. No place can please without you ; and Provence surely less than any other. Give God thanks that you have more courage than your mother ; but do not despise me for my weakness, nor laugh at my chains.

* L E T T E R CLXXVI.

To the Same.

Marseilles, Thursday - - - 1672.

THE devil is certainly let loose in this town ; there never was known in the memory of man such dreadful weather. I cannot but greatly admire the manners of some people, who are so ostentatiously civil and obliging in all outward things, and yet refuse one what one has most at heart : this is hugging you while they strike a dagger into your breast. They thought to dazzle my senses, but I let them see that I can see, and I believe they would laugh as heartily at the farce as myself.

* Mary de Pontevéz de Buons, wife to Leone de Valbelle, marquis de Montfuron, and cousin-german to M. de Grignan.

† M. de Grignan was come thus far to meet his mother-in-law, and conduct her to Grignan.

if they dared to do it. However, we make an absolute carnival time of it. Yesterday we dined with M. de Marseilles, and a very good entertainment we had. He took me in the afternoon to pay the necessary visits, and left me here at night. Le G—— gave us a band of musick, which was extremely good: after that we had some droll masks come in, amongst whom was a little Greek girl, very pretty indeed. Your husband eyed her. Ah! my dear, he is a sad rogue: if you was ever so little disposed to resentment, you would never look on him again. There is one they call the Chevalier de Meme, who pleases me greatly in dancing: they say he does not hate the pretty Greek.

I think with you, my dear, that Betomas is very like Lauzun, and Mad. de Montfuron like Mad. d'Armagnac, and Mademoiselle de Peunes like the late Mademoiselle de Coffe. We are always talking about Paris, and our friends there, with every body who knows any thing of it. If there should be an hour of sun-shine presently, M. de Marseilles is to carry me to gape about. So much for Marseilles and your absence; in the mean while I cannot help putting my hand to my head.

La Santa Cruz || is handsome, fresh coloured, gay, and unaffected; there is nothing false or put on in her person. I desire you will think in time of paying her your compliments, not forgetting to praise her rigaudon, in which she excels. Farewell, my lovely child: the reflection of not seeing you dance among us, absolutely spoils everything one sees of the kind.

LETTER CLXXVII.

To the Same.

Marseilles, Thursday Night at 12 o'clock.

I WROTE to you this morning; my dear, I now proceed to give you an account how I have passed my time since: I have been to mass at the church of St. Vicor with the bishop *; from thence we went by sea on board the Reale †, and saw the exercise there, and all the flags flying, and heard the guns fired off, and saw
seats

|| N. de Galeans, marchioness de Forbin Sainte-Croix.

* Of Marseilles.

† The Admiral-galley, so called.

feats of activity performed by a Turk, and then we dined ; and after dinner away went the good bishop and I, cheek by jole, to see the citadel, and the prospect from thence ; then we visited the arsenal, and saw all the magazines, and the hospital ; and then we walked round the harbour ; and then we returned to supper at his reverence's, where we had all kinds of musick. The prelate and I had a conversation together, in which I said all I thought proper, and without making use of any thing rude or shocking, I laid before him in a cool and reasonable manner the monstrousness of his proceedings : I told him how much more agreeable to me it would have been, had he given me a real proof of his friendship at Lambesc, instead of loading me with a heap of ceremonies and entertainments here at Marseilles, which he must be sensible could only amuse the publick. He seemed a good deal confounded ; and, in fact, the more distant the thing becomes, the more he sees it in its true light. There can be no excuse for not obliging me in such a trifle, when he himself, had he had the least regard for me, might have found a thousand pretences for it, to one objection against it. I repeated to him how plainly he discovered his dislike to us on that occasion : for, said I, the pretence for a refusal was so poor, that it was the most easy thing in the world to see through it. In short we parted : but be assured of this, that had we been the best friends in the world, he could not have done me more honours. To-morrow at five o'clock we shall set out ; and so I take my leave of you for the present, my dear. I have received your letter, and read all the tender and affectionate expressions in it, with a sense that is not to be expressed.

Mad. de Sevigne got safe to Grignan about the latter end of July, 1672, where she remained till the beginning of October, 1673, when she was obliged to return to Paris ; at which time the literary correspondence between the mother and the daughter was resumed. In this interval, however, some of their select friends wrote to them, especially that bright genius Mad. de la Fayette. Some of these letters we shall now present the publick with, for its amusement.

* LETTER CLXXVIII.

Mad. de Coulanges to Mad. de Sevigne.

Lyons, the 1st of August, 1672.

I HAVE received your two letters, my dear creature, and return you a thousand thanks for thinking of me in the place where you are. The weather is most dreadfully hot, and I have no hopes but from its violence *. I die with impatience to be at Grignan; if I suffer this month to slip, I can no longer think of it, so you may depend on it that I will come, if it is possible to get thither alive.

The poor Marquis de Villeroi is daily regretting his misfortune in not having seen you. We have the violins every evening in Belle Court †. I am seldom there, being obliged to be a good deal about my mother. You must know I discharge my duty to a miracle, in hopes of getting to Grignan: you can't think how good-natured the thoughts of it make me. But we have had strange alterations here. Do you remember the figure that Mad. Solus made while you were here? She has imprudently taken a great liking to Mad. Carte. This latter, it seems, had her views in encouraging it; as for me, I believe nothing of it; however, it is the talk of Lyons. In short, it is come out, that it is Mad. Carte with whom the marquis is in love. Mad. Solus is just distracted; but she had rather see the marquis, faithless as he is, than not see him at all; so that it is thought there is no danger of her throwing herself into a convent. What think you of this little history, does it not carry an air of novelty with it?

I forgot to tell you, that the Marquis de Villeroi proposes himself the pleasure of visiting Grignan, with your relation the Count de Rochebonne. I am extremely obliged to you for wishing me with you: there are few things I more earnestly desire than to be speedily there. My impatience, *though violent*, still continues; I hope the heats will not do so: they must be great indeed to prevent my setting out. The rapidity of the Rhone agrees perfectly well with the desire I have of embracing

* Agreeable to the proverb, whatever is violent seldom lasts long

† A publick place in the city of Lyons.

embracing you ; and so, my dear friend, I do not despair of coming to relate to you all the diversions of Belle Cour. You have promised not to say to me as the song does, *Allez, allez, vous etes une laide* * ; that is enough for me. I am afraid lest you should use our governor ill : your way has always appeared different from that of Mad. Solus. You know it has been reported at Paris that Vardes and he met together ; guess where.

LETTER CLXXIX.

From the Same to the Same.

Lyons, 11 September, 1672^d

I AM rejoiced, my dear friend, to find that I have reason to believe you regret my absence ; what makes me think I deserve it, is the uneasiness I feel at not seeing you any longer †. I have made your compliments to *the Charmer* ‡, which he received as he ought to do. I am very well pleased with him. Pray send me Corbinelli ; his apartment is quite ready, and I expect him with an impatience that claims this little journey of him : all our beauties are in expectation of him, and will not set out for the country till he comes. If he abuses my simplicity, and all this turns out only a project, I shall break with him for ever. Adieu, my dear friend ; I have a little business with the Countess de Grignan.

To Madame DE GRIGNAN.

I HAVE no longer any taste for working, Madam ; it is only at Grignan that one can work. *The Charmer* and I, indeed, have began a work about two days since, in which you have a considerable part. I assure you, were you here, you would find me a great workwoman at present. I had a notion that *the Charmer* was to send you some patterns ; but report says, that you never work by patterns yourself, and that those you give are inimitable. Adieu, dear Madam ; I find it very easy to divest myself of all stiffness when I write to you.

† 3: gone, be gone, you are disagreeable.

* Mad. de Coulanges had made a journey to Grignan to see Mad. de Sevigne and her daughter, and this letter appears to be wrote just after her return.

‡ This was a name given to Francis de Neuville, Marquis, afterwards Duke de Villeroi, peer and marshal of France.

Mad. de Coulanges to Mad. de Sevigne.

Lyons, 30 October, 1672.

DO you know that I am very uneasy about you, my charming friend; will you never leave those notions of being so stout? Sure it was no time to be so after your bleeding. I die with impatience to hear from you, and yet it will be an infinite time before I can have that satisfaction. Alas! this is a farewell letter, my dearest friend; I am going to take a journey that will carry me above 100 leagues distance from you! How unaccountable is this! Since the day has been fixed for my departure for Paris, I am just distracted to think of what I am to leave behind me. I must leave my family, my poor family, that will be so distressed for want of me; and yet set out I must, and that on All-Saints day next, when I shall go to Bagnols, and from thence to Rouen, and then *Vogue la Galere*.

Are you not charmed with the present the king has made M. de Marillac*, and with the letter he did him the honour of writing to him? I am now in the 20th book of Ariosto, and am quite charmed with it. Let me tell you, without being suspected of an intent to deceive you, that was I made one of your party at Grignan, I could much better be without Paris and its diversions, than I can be in Paris without you. But I must bid you farewell, my lovely friend, I shall keep *the Charmer* for the fair countess.

Come, my dear confidant †, come hither, and let me take my leave of you; I cannot be easy that I have not seen you; it signifies nothing to reflect on the pain it would have given me to part with you again; I had rather have undergone that, than the vexation of not having had an opportunity of convincing you of my sentiments towards you. I am delighted with M. de Grignan's talent for roguishness; it is the most necessary one imaginable to represent probability. Adieu, my dear good man; it gives me great concern that I am not worthy to accept of that confidence you promise me;

* Of the office of grand master of the wardrobe.

† This is addressed to Mr. Corbinelli.

mise me; but come and take your denial at Paris. Farewel, my friend; my lady countess, farewel: adieu, Mr. Corbinelli; I have the pleasure not to leave you, though I am removing to a distance from you; but, alas! I feel all the pain of being certain of not meeting with you where I am going.

I cannot omit assuring you, that I am so well pleased with the abbey which the king has bestowed on the coadjutor, that I think there is somewhat of ill-breeding in not having complimented me upon it.

LETTER CLXXXI.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 26 December, 1672.

THE siege of Charleroi, is at length raised: I shall not inform you of the particulars of this affair, as I know that Mademoiselle de Meri has sent Mad. de Grignan an exact account of it. It is not yet known what route his majesty proposes to take; some say they are to return directly to St Germain; others that he will go into Flanders; however, we shall soon be informed of his march. I can, without vanity, affirm, that I have the first of all news, for the couriers all stop at Mr. le Tellier's*, where I pass most of my time; he being very much out of order, seems to take a pleasure in having me with him, which is sufficient to make me very diligent in my attendance on him.

I cannot conceive by what accident you missed receiving M. de Coulanges's letter, in which I had enclosed one from myself. The loss indeed is not great, but yet I flatter myself that you did a little regret it, because I have the greatest love for you, my dearest friend; and I know you to be of a grateful disposition. I have paid some visits in company with Mad. de la Fayette; I am perfectly satisfied with her, and I imagine she makes shift to bear with me. We have Mad. de Richelieu here yet; I shall sup with her to night at Mad. du Fresnoy's. This latter is in mighty vogue at court; nothing

* The Prince of Orange, who at that time was set down before Charleroi, was obliged to raise the siege the 22d of December.

* Mad. de Coulanges was niece to M. le Tellier, who was afterwards Chancellor of France.

thing considerable passes in the state without her having a share in it. As to Mad. Scarron, the life she leads is such as surprises every one ; not a creature has the least commerce with her. I have received a letter from her, indeed, but I am very cautious how I make a boast of it, lest I should draw a torrent of impertinent questions upon me. The rendezvous for the Beau Monde is held every evening at the Marechalle d'Estrees. Manicamp and his two sisters are excellent company. Mad. de Sanneterre is there sometimes, but always like the figure of Andromache : her grief becomes perfectly tiresome ; for my part, I can't help thinking that she is fonder of it than she was of her husband. Well, I must take my leave of you, my dear, to prepare for the solemnity of the night. I assure you one must be very attentive to one's dress when one is to sup with Mad. du Fresnoi. Permit me to make my compliments to Mad. de Grignan ; it should be my love, but you will not suffer that.

L E T T E R CLXXXII.

From the Same to the Same

From Lambesc, Tuesday Morning, 10 o'clock,

20 December, 1672.

WHEN one reckons without Providence, one must frequently reckon over again. Here was I, my dear friend, dressed from head to foot, by 8 o'clock, I had drank my coffee, taken my leave of every body, the mules * were all loaded, and the tinkling of their bells gave me notice that it was time to mount my litter ; my room was full of people, begging me not to think of setting out, on account of the heavy rains which had fallen for some days past : however I obstinately refused to listen to their remonstrances, though they assured me it rained at that very time harder than it had done yet ; resolved to abide by the promise I had made you in my letter, of being with you by Thursday at farthest : when in the very instant of my heroic resistance, in comes Mr. de Grignan in his night-gown and slippers, and with a very grave face, talks to me of the rashness of

* In the south of France, they use mules for the draught and carriage, in the room of horses.

of such an attempt ; assures me that the muletier would never be able to follow the litter ; that my mules would fall into some ditch on the road ; and that my people would be so wet and fatigued, that they would not be able to lend me any assistance ; so that all on a sudden I have changed my mind, and yielded to his sage remonstrances : so, my dear friend, the trunks are brought back, the mules are unharnessed, the footmen and maids are drying themselves by the fire, for they are wet through with only crossing the court-yard ; and I dispatch you this messenger, knowing your goodness will make you uneasy, and being willing to make myself less so than I am at present, being very anxious about your health ; so this man will either bring me word of it back here, or else will meet me on the road. In short, my dear, he will wait upon you at Grignan next Thursday instead of me ; and I shall set out the first moment it pleases Heaven and M. de Grignan, who is become absolute master of me and my actions, and is perfectly well acquainted with my reasons for wishing so much to be at Grignan. I should be glad if this affair could be kept a secret from Mr. de la Garde, for he will take a most unmerciful pleasure in finding every thing turn out as he had foretold me ; but let him take care, and not grow vain upon this pretended gift of prophecy.

Adieu, my dearest friend ; do not expect me ; I will come and surprise you in a moment you do not think of me. Believe me, it is much against my will that I am detained prisoner here at Lambesc : but who could foresee such a dreadful time of rain, the like of which has not been known in Provence for some centuries past ?

L E T T E R CLXXXIII.

From Madame de la Fayette to Madame de Sevigne.

Paris, 20 December, 1672.

I HAVE seen your long letter to d'Hacqueville ; I perfectly understand all you say therein concerning the bishop †. I am convinced that the prelate is in the fault, since you think you have reason to complain of him. I shall shew your letter to Langlade, and have a
great

† Of Marseilles.

great mind to, let Mad. du Plessis see it too, for she is greatly prejudiced in favour of the bishop. The Provençals, you know, are a strange kind of people.

I send you a packet for lady Northumberland. You will not easily guess how I came to be charged with this packet: it comes from the Earl of Sunderland, who is ambassador here at present. He has a great friendship for that lady, and has wrote to her several times, but having never received an answer, he is apprehensive that his letters have been intercepted, and has prevailed on M. de la Rochefoucault, whom he frequently visits, to take upon him the conveyance of the packet in question: I must therefore beg the favour of you, as you are no longer at Aix, to send it by some person you can trust, and at the same time to write to lady Northumberland, desiring her to inform you whether she has received it safe, and to send her answer back to your care. It is said that Lord Montagu's journey has not succeeded as he could have wished, so that he will proceed to Italy, to shew the world that lady Northumberland's charms were not the only motives that set him a gadding. Pray let us know what you perceive of this affair, and how you think it will end.

La Marans is fallen into a state of devotion, penitence, and meekness of spirit, that can hardly be conceived: her sister, though far from being fond of her, is both surprised and charmed at it. Her person is so altered you would hardly know her again; she looks as if she was in her grand climacterick. She was greatly displeased at her sister's having told me what she said to her about Mr. de Longueville's child, and complained of me for having made it publick; but her complaints were made in so mild a manner, that Montalais stood confounded both for herself and me; so that to excuse me in some sort, she told her that I was acquainted with the fine opinion she had entertained of my being in love with M. de Longueville. La Marans replied with an admirable justice, that if I was really informed of that, she was surprised I had not said much more, and that she thought I had the most reason of complaint. Mad. de Grignan was mentioned; she said a great many handsome things of her, and without the least affectation. She no longer

longer suffers a creature to come near her : if God confirms this happy disposition in her, it will be one of the greatest miracles I have ever seen.

I went yesterday to the Palais Royal with Mad. de Monaco, where I caught a most dreadful cold. I shed a flood of tears to the memory of MADAME *. I was greatly surprised at the wit of the present one † ; not so much for the agreeableness as for the sensibleness of it. She was rallying the ridiculous conduct of Mr. de Mekkelbourg, in being in Paris at such a time as this ; and I assure you no one could express themselves more justly. She is very obstinate and determined in her resolutions, and most certainly a person of good taste, for she cannot bear the sight of Mad. de Gourdon. MONSIEUR made me all the caresses imaginable, just under the nose of Mad. de Clerembault ‡ ; however, I was kept in countenance by la Fienne, who hates her most sovereignly, and whom I had invited to dine with me about two days before. It is generally believed that the Countess du Plessis § is going to be married to young Clerembault.

Mr. de la R. F. sends you a thousand compliments. He has kept the house these four or five days, having got the gout in miniature. I have acquainted Mad. du Plessis that you write me wonders about her son. Adieu, my sweet friend : how much I love you !

L E T T E R CLXXXIV.

The Duke de la Rochefoucault to Madame de Sevigne.

Paris, Friday 3 June, 1672.

YOU cannot conceive, my dear friend, the pleasure you did me in sending me the most agreeable letter that was ever wrote : it has been read, and with all the admiration you could wish or desire. I shall find a difficult task to acquit myself equally well of the obligation ; however, I shall do my endeavours, but without the hopes of succeeding, by making your health the object

* Henrietta-Anne of England, who died June 29, 1670.

† Elizabeth-Charlotte, Princess Palatine of the Rhine, whom MONSIEUR, only brother to Lewis XIV. took for his second wife the 21st of November, 1671.

‡ Governess to the D. of Orleans' children.

§ Mary-Louisa le Loup de Bellenave, reliet of Alexander de Choiseul, Count du Plessis, married a second time to Rene Gillier.

object of my care ; for you are so happy that way, that you stand in no need of any advice or medicines from me.

The Countess de la Fayette is gone this morning to St. Germain, to return thanks to the king, for a pension of five hundred crowns that he has granted her on an abbey, and which in time will be worth a good thousand to her ; for you must know it is upon a man who has the like pension on the abbey of Fayette, so that they are quit for the present ; but upon the death of the former, the pension remains on his abbey : his majesty accompanied this gift with so many expressions, that it gives us all room to think that he intends to confer still greater favours on her. If I am the first who acquaints you with this piece of news, I think I have half paid M. de Coulanges's letter ; but who is to pay us, my dear friend, for the weary moments we pass here in your absence ? the loss is so great to me, that nothing but your presence can make up for it : but you are not very ready at paying these kind of debts. These are not the first I have lost by you ; and my being a creditor of so long standing, does not in the least secure me against these bankruptcies. The affair between the Chevalier de Lorraine and Mr. de Rohan is happily terminated, the king gave his judgment on their intentions, and there is no room for any one to be offended. Monsieur the duke is returned. Monsieur the prince is to follow in two or three days. We live in hopes of peace ; but, alas ! you do not return, and that is enough to destroy all hopes.

Notwithstanding what you tell me of Madame de Grignan, I cannot believe that ever she thinks of me. However, I return her or you my most humble thanks, for what you are pleased to say to me from her. My mother § is become a perfect mirror of devotion ; she had been composing a hymn for her enemies, in which the *Queen of Provence* * is not forgotten. Embrace the abbe † for me ; tell him, that next to the Marquis of Villeroi,

de Puygarreau, Marquis of Clerembault, and first gentleman of the horse to MADAME the Duchess of Orleans.

§ Mad. de Marans, whom M. de la R. F. always called his mother.

* Mad. de Grignan, whom Mad. de Marans hated.

† De Coulanges.

Villeroi, I stand better than any one in the good graces of M. de Coulanges.

If you have any news of our poor Corbinelli, I beseech you to let me know it. I was thinking to strike out the epithet, but I learn, to the eternal shame of our friends, that he has but too good a title to it.

L E T T E R CLXXXV.

Mad. de la Fayette to Mad. de Sevigne.

Paris, 24 February, 1672.

WERE I but in a place where I could impart all my vexations to you, my dear and charming friend, I am persuaded I should have no more. When I reflect, that the return of Madame de Grignan hither, depends entirely on the peace, as yours does on her, can I do otherwise than languish after this happy event? Count Tot passed this afternoon here; we talked much about you; he remembers all the good things he has heard you say; judge then if his memory does not render him excellent company.

I no longer think, my dear, of leaving St. Germain's. I have met with one of the ladies of honour * there, whom I have a great affection for, and who behaves in the kindest manner to me. I seldom see the queen: I lie at the house of Madame de Fresnoy, in a most delightfully pleasant apartment; which determines me to make frequent excursions thither. Our friends are gone again, my dear, that is M. de la Trousse †, who has been ordered, together with Vaubun, into the Franche Comte, on the king's having received news of an insurrection there. He has appointed them to go with the command thither, not being willing to suffer the Spaniards to send troops through his dominions. La Trousse is not easily to be reconciled to this honour conferred on him, though doubtless it is such an one as could not fail of being very agreeable to a person less wearied with travelling than him. The *Guidon* ‡ continues with us. You must know I took his honour with me the other day, to dine with Mad. de Richelieu: he is beloved by every

* Mad. de Richelieu.

† Captain in the Dauphin's Gens d'armes.

‡ M. de Sevigne, who was guidon, or cornet, in the Dauphin's Gens d'armes.

every one almost as much as by me. Mithridates § is a delightful piece : you weep, you are in a continual admiration ; you see it thirty times over, and the thirtieth time you like it better than you did the first. Pulcheria did not meet with the same success.

Our friend Brancas has a fever, and a defluxion on the breast ; I shall go to-morrow to see him. I have not seen your cardinal † yet, tho' I have always been wishing to do it, but something or other has continually happened to prevent me. The marquis de Villeroy is so much in love, that he sees only with other people's eyes ; never sure was blindness equal to that of his ; every creature pities him : in short, he is rather the *Charmed* than the *Charmer*. He sets no value upon his fortune ; but his fair one sets some value upon Caderousse, and upon one more, and so on to two, three, four, &c. This is absolute truth ; you know I abhor scandal. I embrace Mad. de Grignan ; I heartily wish she was safely brought to bed, and as heartily wish that she would never be with child again : and lastly, that she would come hither, and put every thing out of countenance that is now the object of admiration.

My ever true friend, farewell ! *your little heart* * is very well ; it is very saucy ; it has had its hair cut, and is dressed very prettily.

Mad. Scarron never appears now ; I am extremely sorry for it, for I have no one thing this year that I am fond of. The poor abbe Teru and I are obliged to be fond of one another. Mademoiselle is just wakened with a fit of crying, having dreamt that you was very ill ; so she desires me to tell you at least.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 27 February, 1673.

MONSIEUR de Bayard, and Mad. de la Fayette are this moment arrived ; so, my dear friend,

I have

§ A tragedy of Racine, which was represented for the first time in January, 1673.

† De Retz.

* A name given by Mad. de Sevigne to her little grand-daughter, who was born the 15th of November, 1670. See vol. I. of these letters towards the beginning.

I have time only to say two words to you about your son: he is just gone from hence, and desired me at parting to let you know his reasons for wanting a supply of cash. They are so very good, that I need not take much time to explain them to you at large. In a word, you see what expence you are to expect from a campaign that is likely never to have an end. Every creature is mad, and running to ruin, and it is impossible but your son must do like the rest; besides, the great love you have for Madame de Grignan will not suffer you to neglect her brother: but I leave the great d'Hacqueville to tell you more on this subject, and bid you for this time heartily farewell.

L E T T E R CLXXXVII.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 20 March, 1673.

WE have at length found Mad. Scarron again: that is to say, we know where she is, for as to having any commerce with her, that is not so easy to be done, I'll assure you. There is a certain gentleman who visits at the lady's house where she is, who finds her so amiable, and such excellent company, that he cannot bear her to be absent from his sight. However, she takes no more thought of her old friends than ever she did, and gives them all the time she has to spare in so frank and obliging a manner, as makes them regret that she has not more to indulge them with. I am certain you think the pension of two thousand crowns very moderate; it is so; but then the obliging manner in which it was bestowed, gives reason to hope for something better hereafter. The king has been looking over the pension-list, and finding Mad. Scarron down for two thousand francs, he struck out that sum, and in its room put two thousand crowns.

Every body imagines we shall have peace: but then again every body is dull at a word that escaped the king; that, peace or war, he would not return to Paris till the month of October. I have just received a letter from the young Guidon*, in which he desires me

* M. de Sevigne.

me † to procure him his discharge; and indeed he gives such excellent reasons for it, that I cannot blame him; accordingly I shall set about it, and fancy I shall have no great difficulty in obtaining it.

Mad. du Fresnoi makes such a figure as would surprise you: she has eclipsed Mademoiselle de S—— without mercy: who hearing the beauty of her rival so prodigiously cried up, has never shewn her face abroad. She is certainly a very fine and regular beauty, has a most admirable complexion; but then she is very bashful, though she does not like to have it observed: she is always laughing, and that disagreeably. However, one good thing is, that MADAME will never want a succession of new beauties at her court, in the way she goes on: the least shadow of gallantry makes her immediately put away her maids of honour. I fancy those who stay with her think themselves worse off than those who have left her. Mademoiselle de L—— is going to leave her: Madame de Richelieu desires me to make you many compliments in her name. Adieu, my lovely friend; with your permission and her own, I take the liberty of saluting the Countess of Grignan: is not she brought to bed yet? M. de Coulanges has promised me to send you Mithridates. I am to sit to day for my picture for M. de Grignan: for my part, I had given over all thoughts of sitting any more for my picture.

The Charmer's story is really very pitiable; I know it all——Orondates † was an infant in love to him: he is the only one in the world that truly knows what it is to love. Well, he is certainly the best of men, and his Alcina the worst of women.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 10 April, 1673.

IT is now midnight, which is the reason I cannot write to you: my dear, I am vexed to the heart: I had resolved to answer your agreeable letter, but was hindered in the manner I will tell you. M. de la Rochefoucault

† Mad. de Coulanges was cousin-german to Louvois the secretary at war.

† The hero of a romance.

foucault has spent the whole day with me: I have shewn him Mad. du Fresnoi, and he is quite charmed with her. I am extremely glad to hear that Mad. de Grignan has got rid of her lassitude: the uneasiness and concern I was under on account of her disorder, has made it the greatest joy to hear of her recovery: really it is a piece of barbarity to wish her children. But I must not forget what happened to me this morning: word was brought me that a footman wanted to speak with me from Mad. de Thianges. What d'ye think was his message? *Madam, says he, I come from Mad. de Thianges, who begs the favour of you to send her the letter about Mad. de Sevigne's horse, and that about the meadow.* I told him I would bring them myself to his mistress, and so I got rid of him. Your letters have all the reputation they merit, as you may see. They are certainly very charming; and you are no less so than your letters. Adieu, my dearest friend: I embrace the countess very gently, for fear of hurting her. The king said yesterday, that he would set out the 25th, without fail.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 15 April, 1673.

LADY Northumberland was to see me yesterday; I had been to fetch her with Mad. de Coulanges. She seems to me to have been a very handsome woman; but has not preserved a single feature of her face, nor the least air of youth, which I am greatly surpris'd at: add to this, that she dresses very badly, and without the least taste: in short, I was not at all taken with her. She seemed to understand pretty well every thing that was said to her; that I said to her I mean; for M. de Rochefoucault and Mad. de Thianges, who had both of them a great inclination to see her, did not come till just as she was going out. Montagu sent me word he would be with us. I have spoken a great deal to him about her: he has declared himself her humble servant, without the least reserve. Mr. de Chaulnes set out yesterday, and so did Count Tor. This latter is greatly concerned that he is obliged to quit France. I have

seen him almost every day since he has been here : we have had several conversations about you.

The Marechale de Gramont was taken ill lately. Our friend d'Hacqueville was two or three times backward and forward, to carry her a certain medicine : he is really very abundant in his cares, good man !

Adieu, my dear friend. My blood is so heated, and I am so much out of sorts with the bustle and noise I have had about me all day, that I am perfectly spent. I long for you, to cool my blood for me. Adieu——

L E T T E R CXC.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 19 May, 1673.

TO-MORROW I shall go to Chantilli. This is the same journey which I began the beginning of last year, and was got as far as the Pont-Neuf* when the fever seized me. I know not whether such an odd accident will happen to me this time or not, to hinder my going through with it. We shall be the same company as then, and no more.

Mad. du Pleffis was so charmed with the letter she had from you, that she sent it to me for my perusal. She is set out for Brittany at last. I have given your letters to Langlade, who seemed greatly pleased with them : he always expresses a great esteem for Mad. de Grignan. Montagu is going. It is said that he finds all his hopes baffled. I have a notion that there is something a little out of the way in the mind of his nymph†.

Your son is in love to distraction with Mademoiselle de Poussai. He wishes only to be as much struck as le Fare. Mr. de Rochefoucault says, that poor Sevigne's greatest ambition would be to die for a love that he really did not feel ; for you must know, we none of us look upon him to be capable of very strong passions. As for that of le Fare, I am not at all pleased with it ; I think it beyond all bounds ; it makes him too much the slave : his mistress does not return the least thing he says or does for her. She went to a ball and a supper

* A bridge over the river Seine at Paris.

† Lady Northumberland.

per at Longueil's the very night he set off. Now to go to a publick entertainment the night one's lover is to set out for the army, is to me an unpardonable crime in any woman: I may perhaps be mistaken, I don't know. Adieu, my dear.

LETTER CXCI.

From the same to the Same.

Paris, 26 May, 1673.

IF I had not the head-ach, my dear, I would give an account of my journey to Chantilli, and tell you that no place under the sun comes up to it. The weather was not over and above fine indeed while we were there; but then the pleasures of the chace, which we followed in our coaches, fully made up for it. We staid there almost a week, and longed much for the pleasure of having you with us, not so much on account of the friendship we have for you, as from knowing that you are the most proper person in the world to admire the beauties there as they ought to be admired, and the most reserved of enjoying them. At my return hither, I met with two letters from you. I could not get this of mine finished last Friday, nor shall I be able to finish it to-day, which vexes me, because I think it long since I had a little chat with you.

To answer your questions, I must acquaint you, that Mad. de Brissac * is still at the Hotel Conti, attended by very few lovers, and those not at all calculated for making a noise, so that she does not stand much in need of *St. Ursula's cloak*. The first president of Bourdeaux is in love with her to a degree of folly: you know his head is at the best of times but indifferently furnished. Montagu, I think, has not seen her this trip; I suppose for fear of displeasing lady Northumberland, who by the bye sets off to-day. Montagu is gone before these two days; so that, all things considered, it no longer seems a doubt that they will be married. Mad. de Brissac still continues to act the woe-begone, and affects a great negligence of her person. The Countess du Plessis went into waiting as lady of honour two days only before

* Gabriel Louisa de Saint Simon, duchess of Brissac.

fore MONSIEUR went away ; her mother-in-law* could never be brought to consent to it before. She does not seem desirous of elbowing Mad. de Monaco ; I suppose she thinks as she ought to do, that the second place about MADAME is certainly good enough for the wife of Clerembault, as she will doubtless be in a very little time, if she is not so already.

We are going to dine at Livri, M. de la R. F. Morangis, Coulanges, and I. There is something very odd to me in going to dine at Livri, and not to see you there. The Abbe Tetu is gone to Fontevraud ; I am mistaken, however, if it would not have been better for him to have staid away, lest this journey of his should displease some folks, whom he had better not displease.

It is said that Mad. de Montespan is left at Courtrai. I have had the pleasure of a short letter from you : if you have not received any from me, it is purely on account of the hurry I have been in : I would tell you all my reasons if you was here. Monsieur le Duc finds time lie very heavy upon his hands at Utrecht. The women of that country are frightful creatures. The following story is told about him. It seems he was taking a few familiarities one day with a young girl there, purely to divert himself, I suppose ; but as his freedoms were a little of the roughest, she says to him, *Upon my soul, Monseigneur, your highness is pleased to be rather too impudent.* I thought you would be as much pleased with it as I was. Adieu, my charming friend ; I am all yours.

L E T T E R CXCII.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 30 June, 1673.

WELL, my dear ; well, what reason is there pray for all this out-cry ? I desired you to suspend your judgment of me till you come here ; and pray what is there so very terrible in these words ? My days are wholly taken up, I have scarce an hour to myself. It is true Bayard is here, and takes a great deal of business

* Colombe de Charron, wife to Cæsar duke of Choiseul, peer and marshal of France, and first lady of honour to MADAME of Orleans.

ness off my hands : but when he has been running about busy all the day for me, can I sit down and write ? I have always something or other to say to him. When I have been running about all day myself, and come back, I find M. de la R. F. that I have not seen all day, can I sit down and write ? Perhaps he, and Gourville are with me, can I write ? But when they are gone ; oh ! when they are gone, my dear, it is almost twelve o'clock ; and then I have to go out, for I lie at a neighbour's at present, because they are building just over-against my chamber-window. But in the afternoons ; why, child, in the afternoon I have the head-ach : in the morning ; why, I have the head-ach then too, and take an herb soup that intoxicates me. In short, you live in Provence, my dear friend, where all your hours are free ; and, which is more, your head is clear, so that you never lose your taste for writing. You write to every body ; now, for my part, I have no inclination to write to any body ; and if I had a lover that was to expect a billet from me every morning, I should certainly break with him.

Let me desire you then not to measure my friendship by my writing ; I shall love you as well, though I should not write a sheet to you in a month, as you would me in writing to me ten times in a week. When I am at St. Maur, I shall be better able to write ; for I shall have my head and my hands more at liberty : but I have no time to go there : I have spent but a week there all this year ; and as to Paris it kills me. If you was only to know how much I might make my court to some people, with whom it is very necessary to keep in, by sending them every now and then a little nonsense ; and how negligent I am in this respect, you would readily own that I have it not in my power to do as I would on this head.

This very day three years I saw poor MADAME die. I have been reading over some of her letters : in short, I am quite full of her. Adieu, my dearest friend ; you have but one fault, and that is your distrust of your friends ; it is the only thing that I dislike in you. M. de la R. F. will write to you.

LETTERS OF THE LETTER CXCH.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 4 July, 1673.

YOU have here an exact journal of all that has happened to me since I wrote to you last. In the first place I have had two fits of my ague. It is above six months since I have had any physick. Well, they gave me physick once, twice. The day after the second dose, as I was sitting down to dinner, I felt myself on a sudden very sick. Lord! says I, I am not well! I can eat no soup. Well then, eat a little meat. No—I do not choose any. Then you will eat some fruit. I don't know but that I may. Why don't you then? No, I cannot touch it, I may eat perhaps by and bye; see that I have some chicken broth, and a boiled chicken for supper. Night comes, and up comes the broth and the chicken: take it away, I cannot touch it; my stomach turns against it; I'll go to bed; I have more mind to sleep than to eat. Well, to bed I go; there I turn, and turn, and turn; I am not ill, but then I can get no sleep: I ring the bell, I have a light brought, I take a book and read a little, then I lay it down again; at length day appears: I get up, slip on my cloaths, and go to the window: four o'clock strikes, five, six; I go to bed again. At noon I sit down to table, but to no purpose: in the evening I go to bed, as I said the night before, but to no purpose. Are you ill? No. Are you faint? No. And in this condition was I for three days and three nights. I have recovered my sleep a little now; but I eat only by artifice, as they make the horses do by rubbing their mouths with vinegar: otherwise I cannot say I am ill; nor, on the whole, have I the head-ach so bad as usual.

I have been writing a parcel of nonsense to Monsieur de Duc. I intend to go next Sunday, if I am able, to Livri for a day or two. I am very ready to love Mad. de Coulanges for your sake. Are you resolved, my dear, to oblige me to use my rhetorick to maintain, that my love for you is greater than yours to me? I would make Corbinelli own it in a quarter of an hour. O, pray let me hear something about him. Are all our good wishes to be of none effect to this poor man! It is my opinion, that he owes all his ill-fortune to his merit.

merit. Segrais is one of those too who carry their ill-luck about with them. Mad. de Thianges has a great friendship for Corbinelli, so has Mad. Scarron, so have a thousand people besides, and yet he does not seem to have the least shadow of hope of getting any thing done for him. There is a fund set apart for the pensions of men of wit and learning. No one has a better title than himself to be included in the number, and yet he is not so much as thought of in it.

I am to see Mad de V—— to-morrow. This is a ridiculous creature, who is with child by M. d'Ambres, for which she has sued him, and lost her cause. She tells every body her adventure, with all its circumstances; she pretends he ravished her; now you know this naturally introduces some very entertaining particulars. La Marans is a perfect saint: I am not jesting: it has all the air of a miracle to me. La Bonnetot is turned religious too; she has thrown away her glass eye, left off *rouge*, and never curls her hair. Madame de Monaco does not follow her example: she is become a favourite of this MADAME as she was of the other, and seems full as fond of her as she did of the other. These things are a little extraordinary to me. Langlade sets out to-morrow for Poictou, where he is to stay for two or three months: he has not the use of his arm yet. The Countess du Plessis is going to be married. Her ladyship has some thoughts of purchasing Frene. M. de la R. F. is in very good health, and sends a thousand, and a thousand, and a thousand good wishes to you and Corbinelli. Here is a question couched between two maxims*.

*One may pardon a breach of faith, but one cannot forget it:
One may forget a breach of faith, but one cannot pardon it.*

“ Had you rather be false to your lover, and yet continue to love him; or have your lover false to you, and yet continue to love you?” Observe, that by being false is not meant to leave a person for another, but to have committed some considerable fault against him. Adieu, you see I am got into a strain of talking: this is the effect of not eating nor sleeping. I embrace Mad. de Grignan, and all her perfections.

* M. de la Rochefoucault was author of a book of MAXIMS.

L E T T E R CXCIV.

From the Same to the Same.

Paris, 4 September, 1673.

I AM now at St. Maur *; I have left all my business and all my husbands; I have taken with me only fair weather and my children, which is as much as I want. I take care of my health, and drink the waters of Forges. I see no body, but I don't care for that; every one seems devoted to pleasures, and to pleasures that depend wholly upon other people, that, for my part, I think it is a gift of the fairies to me that I am of the humour I am. I don't know whether Mad. de Coulanges has informed you of a conversation that passed one afternoon at Gourville's, when Mad. Scarron and the abbe Tetu were there, about those persons *who have a taste above or below their understandings*. We ran into so many subtleties, that we were quite bewildered. If your Provence air, which is so apt to subtilize every thing, should operate upon your ideas with regard to these notions of ours that we send you, you will be quite in the clouds. *You have a taste below your understanding, and so has Mr. de la R. F. and so have I, but less so than either of yours.* These are examples for your direction.

Mr. de Coulanges tells me your journey is put off again; provided you bring Mad. de Grignan with you, I shall not complain of it; but if you do not, I shall think you have made your absence too long.

I have received the five hundred livres some time since. Methinks now that money is so scarce, it is a shame to take it of one's friends; so pray make my excuses to Mr. l'abbe † for having taken it.

L E T T E R CXCV.

Madame de Sevigne to Madame de Grignan.

From Montelimart, Thursday 3 October, 1672†.

THIS is a dreadful day, my dear child; I must own to you I can scarce support it. I have left you, my dear; and left you in a condition that adds to my
forrow.

* A house Mad. de la Fayette had a few miles out of town.

† De Coulanges.

† This was the day on which Mad. de Sevigne left Grignan to set out for Paris, as did Mad. de Grignan at the same time on her journey

sorrow. I think of every step I take, and every one you take; and that were we to go on in this manner, we should never meet again. My heart is truly at rest when I am near you: it is then in its natural state, the only one in which it can take pleasure. What passed this morning has given me the most sensible uneasiness, and caused a tumult within me, which your philosophy will not be at a loss to account for. I feel the reasons but too severely, and am likely to feel them yet for some time longer. I am seeking you incessantly: I seem to have lost the better part of myself: but, alas! how am I to recover it! The agreeable time I have passed renders the present more afflicting, till I am a little more accustomed to it; but I can never be so much so as not ardently to wish to see and embrace you again. I have no reason to hope that it will be better for the time to come than it has been in time past. I know what I have already suffered by your absence; and I shall now be still more to be pitied, since I have for some time made it a necessary custom to see and converse with you. I think I did not embrace you sufficiently at parting; what was there to hinder me from doing it? I did not tell you all the satisfaction I feel from your filial duty and tenderness: I did not recommend you enough to M. de Grignan; nor did I return him sufficient thanks for all his civilities and kindness to me; but I expect that he will continue to give me proofs of it on every occasion: there is one where his own interest is more concerned than mine, and yet I am the person most affected by it.

I already begin to be devoured with expectations, and long to receive letters; and yet I know they will only minister fresh matter of sighing. In short, my dearest child, I live only for you. God grant me the grace to love him with equal fervor! I am continually thinking of the *Pichons*. I am made up of Grignans, and all that belong to them. Never sure was journey so dull and melancholy as ours: not a word passed between us. Adieu, my dearest child; pity me for being thus torn from you! Alas! here are we again at our letter-writ-

D 3

ing!

journey to Salons and Aix. Montelimart is not above three or four leagues from the family seat of Grignan.

ing! Assure the archbishop of my tenderest respects, and embrace the coadjutor for me: I recommend you to his care. We have dined once more at your expence. But here comes M. de Saint Goniez to comfort me.

* L E T T E R CXCVI.

The Same to the Same.

From Valence, Friday 6 October, 1673.

MY sole pleasure consists in writing to you. The indolence of the coadjutor in this respect is very surprising. You are now at Salons, my poor dear girl; you have passed the Durance, and I am arrived here. I examine all the roads that you are to pass through this winter, and make my remarks upon such places as appear the most difficult and dangerous. The safest way of travelling in the winter is in a litter; for there are some places where you must get out of your coach, or have your neck broke. M. de Valence * sent me his coach, with Montreuil and le Clair, to leave me more at my ease. I waited on him as soon as I got in. We had a good deal of chat together: your merit and his misfortune were the principal topics: he seems a man of a very good understanding. He has two ladies, relations of his, with him.

I paid a short visit to the sisters of St. Mary, and to your sister-in-law †: her charming abbess is dying; there is great interest made to succeed her. I supped at le Clair's with Montreuil: I am lodged there. Mr. de Valence and his two nieces came to see me, furiously dressed out. It is reported here that the king is gone to join the prince. Not a word now about peace. My heart is all over in a flutter, when I think that perhaps I have reason to doubt of your coming to Paris. I cook ‡ incessantly, and am very easy about talking. As for our abbe, you know he delights in nothing but
les

* Daniel de Cosnac, bishop of Valence, afterwards archbishop of Aix.

† Maria Adhemar de Monteil, sister to M. de Grignan, one of the religious at Aubenas.

‡ Je cuis, by this expression Mad. de Sevigne means that she broods over her melancholy.

les beaux jeux de sa cassette *. Oh! how I long to hear from you! Methinks it is already an age since I saw you.

LETTER CXCVII.

To the Same.

Lyons, Tuesday 10 October, 1673.

HERE am I, my dear, already at a dreadful distance from you. Oh! did you but know the grief the thought of it gives me: I was received at the Chamariers † by himself and sister: I found my heart much affected while I was embracing that lovely woman; she seemed no less so on her part. We talked a good deal. I began the conversation by defending Mr. de Grignan and his proceedings. The Chamariers did not know the true state of the affair. It is the best cause in the world to defend, and can never suffer but by being ill explained, or misunderstood.

Let me tell you once more, that if you desire to avoid the dangers that will attend your journey this winter, you must quit your coach as often as I have done; but in a litter would be an admirable way of travelling, or even on horseback, as Mesdames de Verneuil and Arpajon have done. Mr. de Veruille's coach broke down last year. There is another road too, which they made us take through a part of the river Rhone. I alighted, and my horses swam across, till the water came in at the bottom of the coach: this place is about two leagues from Montelimart. When you are upon your journey, the waters will be very much swelled, and the place not tenable; so that you must go round by some grounds, and not venture the passage: I assure you the danger is not imaginary. My fondness and foresight oblige me to give you these cautions: you may laugh at them if you will, but I fancy M. de Grignan will not laugh at them. You will tell me, I suppose, that every thing goes to our wish, that we are going to have a speedy peace, and then away for Paris! Very true, but even if war should be declared against Spain, it will be a work of time, and not

* The beautiful eyes of his casket, an expression of the miser in the *Avare*, a comedy of Moliere's.

† Chamariers is a dignity in the cathedral church of St. John of Lyons.

likely to give any immediate employ to those who have governments. I think it would be the best policy for Mr. de Grignan to come to court; the sooner the better. I am in expectation of letters from you this evening: when I have received them I shall close my packet.

L E T T E R CXCVIII.

To the Same.

Tuesday night at 11 o'clock, 10th October, 1673.

I HAD not the power to receive your letter without shedding tears very heartily. Methinks I see you in Aix overwhelmed with melancholy, and completely finishing the destruction of your strength of body and mind. This thought destroys me: I think I see you fly from me; you disappear, and I behold you no more. I am perfectly well apprised of the uneasiness my departure must have given you: you do not know what to do without me; you have been accustomed to see me continually *revolving about you*. It is an addition to one's wretchedness to see those places again where one has been once happy. It is true I have never been in company with you on any of these roads; but when I passed them last, I was full of joy and transport in the thoughts of seeing and embracing you; but now that I am on my return, I feel a deadly grief of heart, and I cannot but envy the sentiments I then had; for, alas! there is an evident difference between those and the present. I all along lived in hopes of bringing you with me; you know what reasons I had for it, and in what a manner you cut me short of them. I could not but acquiesce in the force of your reasons, and admire you for them; but do you know that nothing in the world has so unnatural a look as to see me going back to Paris alone? Was I but sure that you would come to us this winter, I should be completely happy and contented; in that case I should only vex myself for three months, agreeable to your desire: but I leave you; I am going still farther from you: all this I am sure of, but know nothing about the future.

It was a great pleasure to me to embrace your dear sister-in-law; I can bear nothing but what is Grignan. I shall answer our mother of Saint Mary's. I passed this day

day with those of that society who are here. I shall set out to-morrow for Burgundy : here is another great satisfaction to me ; I shall not be able to receive any of your letters but by Paris ; let them be directed to M. de Coulanges there, and he will take care and send them to me at Bourdilli. Adieu, my ever amiable child ; you would have me judge of your heart by my own ; I do so, and therefore I both love and pity you.

L E T T E R CXCIX.

To the Same.

From a little dog-hole of a village, about six leagues from Lyons, Wednesday Evening, 11 October, 1673.

I AM just got to this place, which would make me melancholy, were I not so already ; there is not a single thing in it ; it is a perfect desert : but I can write to you, and that is the only amusement I wish, when absent from you. Pray tell the coadjutor, that to stir up his jealousy a little, Chamarande lives about a league from hence, he is lord of the manor to five or six parishes hereabouts, he is waiting for his majesty's return. I know a great deal more news, but I will not trust you with it. I left Lyons this morning about eight o'clock, surrounded by all the Rochebonnes, whom I greatly love and esteem. Monsieur Rochebonne is going to pay a visit to his estates, and set every thing in order, ready to follow to the wars if called upon.

We saw some excellent pictures at Lyons. I must say that I blame monsieur de Grignan, for not accepting that which the archbishop of Vienna would have made him a present of. The picture is of no service to him, and it is as pretty a thing of the kind, as one would wish to see. A propos, this archbishop is brother-in-law to madam de Villars, and behaved with the greatest civility. Adieu, my dearest child ; you write to me in the most tender and affectionate manner, that though it wounds, yet it delights my heart.

L E T T E R CC.

To the Same.

Bourbille, Monday 16 October, 1673.

AT length, my dearest child, I am got to the old mansion of my fore-fathers, I have found my lovely meadows, my little river, and the pretty mill near it,

in the same place where I left them. These walls have afforded pleasure to people of much more consequence than myself, and yet I cannot forbear dying with grief, when I think of having left Grignan to come here: I could cry now most heartily, if I would give way to it; but I follow your advice, and keep the mastery over my sorrow. I have seen you here, my dear child, with Buffy, who used to amuse us so agreeably. Here it was that you called me *mother-in-law*, with such a pretty air. They have topped the trees that are before the gate, which has made the walk up to the house very pleasant. We abound in corn every where about here, but the deuce a penny of money. It is pouring down rain; I have been so little used to these storms of late, that they quite disconcert me: I am really angry at them. Mr. de Guitaut is at Epoises, he has been continually sending here, to know when I arrived, that he might come and fetch me. But that is not the way to do business. I shall pay him a visit, and you may judge that the conversation will turn upon you; I desire you will make yourself quite easy about what I shall say to him, I am not generally very imprudent; you shall hear from us both; I cannot well bear with the want of seeing you; if you really love me, you will give me a proof of it this year. Adieu, my dearest child, I am but just got in, and am a little fatigued; when I am a little settled, you shall hear farther from me.

L E T T E R CCI.

To the Same.

Bourbille, Saturday 21 October, 1673.

I GOT in here Monday night last, as I wrote you word the moment of my arrival. Here I met with letters from Guitaut, which had been lying for me some time. The next morning about nine o'clock, he came here upon a full gallop, as wet as a rat, for it rained incessantly. We had a world of conversation together, he talked much of you, and afterwards gave me an account of his own affairs, and of the reasons he had to be displeased; he told me that the king was returned from Versailles; he informed me of news concerning the war, and is of opinion, that Mr. de Grignan

nan is in policy obliged to come to court, and justify his conduct, as well as to take his majesty's orders from his own mouth, relating to the operations of the war, in your parts, supposing it to break out. All this he told me as pure matter of fact, and without any intention to flatter my wishes, or from any views of interest on his side; for he seems very little disposed to return to Paris this winter.

After we had made a very good dinner, considering the rusticity of this house, behold a coach and six driving into the court-yard; Guitaut is ready to die with laughing; and who should I see alight at the same time, but the countess de Fiesque and madame de Guitaut, who ran and caught me in their arms. I cannot figure to you my astonishment at seeing them, nor the joy that Guitaut seemed to take in having thus agreeably surprised me. In short, here is the *Countess* at Bourbille, only think of that! and more beautiful, more fresh, more magnificent, and more lively, than ever you saw her in your life. After all those exclamations on one side and on the other, which you will readily conceive; they sit, they warm themselves, and then fall to talking about you; here again, you will partly guess at the nature of the conversation, and at the surprise of the countess, when she found that I had not brought you back with me. In short, all this agreeable company seemed full of the warmest esteem for you; and now we fell upon the topick of news.

Guitaut began by telling me, that *MONSIEUR* is resolved to have mademoiselle de Grancei made dressing-woman to *MADAME*, in the room of la Gourdon, who is to have a present of fifty thousand crowns; but this seems attended with a good deal of difficulty, for the marshal de Grancei will not part with that sum, any otherwise than as a marriage portion for his daughter, and as he is apprehensive that he shall have a demand for the same sum when he comes to dispose of his daughter, he is resolved that *MONSIEUR* shall be at the whole expence. Madame de Monaco has the management of this affair; she is very well both with the duke and dutchess, and equally respected by them, only that it is a little disgustful now and then to see her bestow all those

those little careffes and speeches on this MADAME, which she did on the last. I have here passed some other extraordinary things at court, but they are not writeable. As for Madame de Marei, she left Paris out of pure prudence, when all the collections and entertainments first began, and retired into Burgundy, and was received at Dijon by a discharge of all the guns in the place. You may guess what a number of fine things that gave occasion to say, and what a light this journey appeared in to the publick; the truth of the matter is, that she had a cause depending at Dijon, which she wanted to have decided; but however the rencounter was pleasant enough. The countess is very diverting upon this subject; she has been about a fortnight at Epoises, she came there from Guerchi. It seems there is a certain little obscure fellow, who said one day that the Abbe Tetu would make a very good soul for a large body. All this diverted me extremely.

Well, night surprised us in the midst of our chat, and the company began to think of going home, after having first admired all the old fashioned curiosities of the place. They would fain have had me away with them, but I had too much business of consequence on my hands, to give into a project of that kind; so that I shall stay till to morrow, to go to Epoises, and shall return the next day. We shall write to you all together; if you had come with me, you would have had the pleasure of meeting with all this good company, who would have hindered you from being dull I will answer for it.

As for the air here, there is no breathing in it without growing fat, it is moist and thick; and admirably calculated for restoring that humidity, which the air of Provence had dried up. This day I shall finish all my business: if you was in want of corn, I would offer you some of mine, I have above 20,000 bushels to dispose of, and yet I cry famine in the midst of all this plenty. However, I have secured purchasers for as much as amounts to 140,000 francs, and renewed my leases without any abatements. This is the whole of what I had to do, and I have had the honour of find-
ing

ing out expedients which Monsieur l'Abbe with all his wisdom escaped.

I have just received a paquet from Guitaut, with news which you will have your way. He is to come to fetch me on Monday. I embrace Monsieur de Grignan, and do assure him that he would have pity on me, did he but know what I suffer while absent from you. As for you, my dearest child, I embrace you with an affection and tenderness that is not given to every one to be sensible of.

L E T T E R CCII.

To the Same.

From Epoises, Wednesday 25 October, 1673.

I ARRIVED at this place last Monday, where they were waiting for me with the greatest impatience. Here I found the master and mistress of the house as full of merit as you know them to be, and the *Countess* * who dresses out, and enlivens all the country round her. I brought with me Monsieur and Madame de Toulonjeon, who are no strangers here; we were joined afterwards by Madame de Chatelus, and the Marquis de Bonneval, so that now the company is complete. The house here is surprisingly large and beautiful, Monsieur de Guitaut takes a great deal of pleasure in making it as elegant as possible, and spares no cost for that purpose. One might pass a considerable time here without being wearied; you have been greatly celebrated amongst us. I do not think I should ever be for leaving it, could I but hear from you here; but the state of ignorance in which I am about you, almost distracts me. I puzzle my brains to think what you have wrote to me; and what has happened to you for these six weeks past; in short, I can have no rest for thinking of you, I shall certainly find five or six letters from you at Paris. I cannot conceive the reason why Monsieur de Coulanges has not sent them to me here, I desired him to do it. However, I set out to-morrow on the road to Paris, where I shall not arrive till the eve of All Saints. I am told that the roads begin already to be frightful in this province; I say nothing to you
about

about the war, which some say is already declared, while others, who are of the ministerial party, will have it that every thing tends to a peace, a little time will clear all up. Monsieur d'Arhin is in this country, I have not seen him here, but he is just by, and I have seen those who have been happy enough to have received his benediction. Adieu, my dear, my lovely child, I do not meet with a creature but what thinks you are greatly in the right to love me, from the love which they see I have for you.

L E T T E R CCHI.

To the Same.

From Augerre, Friday 27 October, 1673.

I LEFT Epoises yesterday, and all the company that I told you was there. I was just nine days in Burgundy, and I may say that my presence and the Abbe's were very necessary at Bourbille. I had a great deal of conversation with Guitaut, who amused me much by letting me into certain circumstances relating to his affairs, that I was before ignorant of; it is always good to hear both sides; he did me a sensible pleasure, by giving me an opportunity of restoring him the whole of my good opinion, which had been a little impaired by the stories I had heard concerning him, and which might have gone greater lengths, had I not been wonderfully confident in the honesty and openness of his countenance and actions; I always thought him a person of sincerity, and I begin to believe that the whole reason of his being dismissed from the Hotel de Conde, was on account of his giving umbrage to some there, and that such a favourite as himself, was no ways pleasing in so small a court. There are some very extraordinary passages in his romance; it seems to end in a retreat to his castle, however I would not be too positive. The countess told some admirable things about the Grancei family*. There is something very curious in the plan of that house; but I insist upon it, that every other jealousy keeps silence in presence of the person

* It was said that Monsieur le Duc was in love with the eldest daughter of the Marshal de Grancei, and Monsieur with the youngest. These young ladies from their great beauty, went by the name of the Angels, among the Beau monde.

son † who is one of the actors in this comedy. He is the very quintessence of jealousy, it is jealousy itself; I am surpris'd that there was any more left in the world, after the extravagant portion that fell to his lot.

I am in great pain, my dear, to know how you are. I fear you cherish your natural disposition too much, you bury yourself in melancholy, consider, my dear child, it is a strange thing to be buried in melancholy. Our good Abbe is very well, thank God, I am not a little vain of it; he salutes you affectionately, and wants much to hear a little about you; and to know whether you remember the advice he used to give you, at the hazard of being hated for it, which, however, did not deter him. I embrace Monsieur de Grignan; pray make my compliments to the archbishop, if you are at Salens; and assure the coadjutor, that in expectation of the time when, as he tells me, I am to love him so much, I love him a good deal.

* L E T T E R CCIV.

To the Same.

From Moret, Monday night 30 October, 1673.

I AM now very near Paris, my dear, but without the hopes of meeting with letters there from you, my arrival would give me very little satisfaction. Besides, I am continually thinking of the many things I could employ you in; all that I must now say myself to Brancas, la Garac, the Abbe de Grignan, d'Hacqueville, Monsieur de Pomponne, and Monsieur le Camus; more than that, where I met with you, I desire no other pleasure; I really merit that my friends should fall upon me and drive me back again. Ah! would to heaven they did! perhaps I may get the better of this humour I am now in, and that my heart which is at present such a slave to sorrow, may a little recover its liberty; but it can never do otherwise than passionately long to see you; in the mean time, to talk of you shall be my darling joy, the favourite employment of all my hours; but then I will choose my company and my subject, I am well enough acquainted with life, to know that what is pleasing to some people, is distasteful to others, therefore, my dear, be under no apprehensions

† Monsieur le Duc.

lest I should be imprudently communicative of my sentiments.

If Monsieur de Sens † had been in his diocese, I should have waited on him, I think I owe him that piece of civility, for the opinion he has of you; I have had news from my son, his letters were written the evening before the day on which they thought they were to have an engagement; I presently figured the enemy to myself as very near, but, for his part, he seemed to think nothing about it; but rather seemed desirous of exercising his rapier by the way of curiosity. I should have been dreadfully alarmed at this letter, had I not been very well informed concerning the march of the Imperialists, and the great respect they have for your *Brother's army*.

My God! my dearest child, how am I using you! what a heap of stuff have I been teasing you with! perhaps when I write to you from Paris, I may send some trifle or another that may divert you; but you may swear the things of most importance, will come from Provence; but your health, there is the distracting thought! I fear you do not sleep well, and should fall sick at last; you tell me nothing about it, but that only adds to my uneasiness.

LETTER CCV.

To the Same.

Paris, Thursday 2 November, 1673.

AT length, my dear child, I arrived in safety here, after a journey of four weeks, which has fatigued me less than the last night, which I passed in the best bed that could be. I never once closed my eyes, I counted every hour upon my watch, and the moment the day broke, I got up. *Car que faire en un lit, a moins que l'on ne dorme *?* We got in yesterday, which was All Saints, the better day the better deed; we alighted at Monsieur de Coulanges, I will not repeat you all my folly and weakness in coming into the town; in short, I saw the hour and moment in which I was not

† The Bishop of Sens.

* What business has one in bed, when one cannot sleep? A line in one of Blot's *Chansons choisies*.

not fit to be seen myself, however, I checked myself as much as possible, and said that the wind had made my nose red; I found Mr. de Coulanges ready to embrace me, and in less than a minute, came Monsieur de Rare, Madam de Coulanges, and Mademoiselle de Meri. In a moment after followed Madame de Sanzei.

Madame de Bagnols, and the archbishop of Rheims who is full of love and admiration for the coadjutor; then came Madame de la Fayette, Monsieur de la Rochefoucault, Madam Scarron, d'Hacqueville, la Garde, the Abbe Grignan, the Abbe Tetu; I am persuaded you hear and see all that passed, even where you are, and the joy that was expressed on all sides, *and Madame de Grignan? and her journey?* and a long train of et cætera's, without connection or end. At length supper was served up, then every one retired, and I passed the night in the fine manner which I have told you.

This morning at nine o'clock la Garde, the Abbe de Grignan, Brancas, and d'Hacqueville, came into my chamber to have a little private chat; in the first place let me tell you, that you cannot too much esteem Brancas, la Garde, and d'Hacqueville: as for the Abbe de Grignan, that comes of course: for they have the most sincere regard for you, and think of nothing but how they may serve you; they met with the right person in me for a conversation of this kind, accordingly we kept it up till noon. La Garde gives me very strong assurances of Mr. de Pomponne's friendship; they are all three very well satisfied with him. If you ask me what is the talk at present at Paris, I shall tell you that it is all about the Count and Countess de Grignan, their affairs, their interests, their return, &c. In short, I have heard of nothing else hitherto, those who understand matters will tell you what they think about your return, I do not desire you to believe me, mind what la Garde says. We have been considering on how many accounts you ought to come up, in order to adjust matters both with the head and the other principals, which your good friend * has used all his endeavours to confound;

* All this relates to a dispute which subsisted at that time, between the Bishop of Marseilles and the Grignan family.

confound; there is not a person that he has not found-
ed, nor a thing that he has not endeavoured to misre-
present in his discourses, which are all full of a secret
venom, concealed under the most insinuating address.
Nay, I think it would be proper for you to declare
openly your intentions of coming, and perhaps you
may meet with him here, for he talks of coming hi-
ther too; and then Mr. de Pomponne and the rest of
your friends will be ready to assist you, and set your
affairs upon a proper footing for the time to come; but
while you are at such distance, you will always slip
their remembrance: besides, the person that speaks
here, has always the advantage of him who says no-
thing. When you set out for Orange, I mean Mr. de
Grignan's, I would have you inform Mr. de Louvois of
the state of things by letter, that he may not be sur-
prised when they come to be canvassed.

I saw a while ago Monsieur de Pomponne, Monsieur
de Bezon, Madame d'Huxelles, Madame de Villars,
the Abbe de Portocarrero, and Madame de Bare, who
all of them send you a thousand compliments and good
wishes. This is all I have to say to you. It is our ad-
vice to you here, that you do not send any ambassadors;
and are absolutely of opinion, that you and Mr. de Gri-
gnan should come in person. The reason about the war
is of no signification. Monsieur de Pomponne told
d'Hacqueville, that matters would not be soon settled in
Provence, as some people might imagine, and that war
often breaks out when there is the most talk of peace.

Let me tell you a piece of drollery. The other day
Madame de Ra—— and Madame de Bu——, had a
warm dispute about twelve pistoles; la Bu——, tired
of the controversy, told her it was a trifle not worth
disputing about, and so she would give it up: upon my
word, madam, says the other lady, this is a very ex-
cellent air of generosity you give yourself, who have
your lovers to supply you with cash. As for that ma-
dam, replied la Bu——, I am not obliged to explain
myself to you on that head; but this much I know,
that when I was first acquainted with the world, which
was about ten years ago, you paid yours. Despreaux
was with Gourville, to wait on Monsieur the Prince,
who

who was desirous that he should see the army he commanded; well, says he to the poet, what do you think of my army? I believe, my lord, replied Despreaux, it will be a very fine one when it comes to age. Now you must know, the oldest man amongst them is not above eighteen.—

The Princess of Modena * was just on my heels at Fountainbleau, she came in here this evening, she lodges at the Arsenal, the king is to pay her a visit to-morrow, she is to wait on the queen at Versailles, and then adieu.

Read all the letters you receive from d'Hacqueville with attention, for whatever he writes is of importance, indeed you cannot love him too well; he is not certain yet where he shall pass the winter. I am perfectly well entrusted in all that relates to your interests, and I speak better upon that head here, than at Grignan.

I have received your letters of the 15th, 18th, 22d, and 23d of October, and cannot sufficiently thank you for the love and tenderness you express, and the care you take to inform me of every thing that concerns you. We could not help smiling at your care, in desiring me to send for la Garde and the Abbe de Grignan, alas! poor souls, they were already upon the watch, and thought of nothing but me.

I am wholly yours, my dear, and am so well pleased with the time I dedicate to you, that I make every thing give way to the least circumstance that relates to you. I heartily embrace our poor count; do you think I may continue to love him still? have you no objection to it?

LETTER CCVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 6 November, 1673.

IHAVE had an excellent conversation of above two hours with Monsieur de Pomponne, never had any one a more favourable audience, or more pleasing reception. D'Hacqueville was present, who will tell you the

* Maria d'Este Princess of Modena, who was going to be espoused to the Duke of York, brother to Charles II. and after his death King of England, by the name of James II.

the same; we were both highly delighted with him. Whether he perceives matters likely to produce a peace, I cannot tell; but he said, that the war should not in the least hinder him from asking leave for Mr. de Grignan to come up after the assembly was broke up, and that he thought your best way would be to take your own time for this journey.

How good you are, my dear, in having wrote to my friend Corbinelli, and to Madame de la Fayette. This latter is charmed with you to the greatest degree, and loves you better than ever she did. She longs earnestly to see you here, you know her, and may depend upon the sincerity of what she says. Mr. de la R. F. is as amiable and worthy as ever; he has not stirred out of my room these two days. You may depend upon his friendship, and on that of many others, whom I will not name, for it would be a catalogue without end. I have had several visits from the people of fashion, and my cousins de Bussi among the rest, most furiously bedizened in new silks they bought at Semur. The Dutcheß of York is at the Arsenal, all the town runs there; the king has been to see her, and she has been to Versailles to visit the queen, who ordered her a *Fauteuil* *. The queen is to return her visit to-morrow, and then she is to decamp.

I dined to-day at Madame de la Fayette's, for the first time of my being abroad, for hitherto I have played the person of importance in my own apartment; do you not propose going to Salons, † when Monsieur de Grignan is gone to Orange? I have received answers from all your gentlemen, pray remember me to them sometimes, and to your ladies too, whom I greatly honour and esteem. Does Madame de Beaumont still keep up her character of forgetfulness? you may say as you please, my dear child, but I am very uneasy about your health; you sleep ill I am persuaded, and you harbour a train of thoughts enough to destroy you. Pr'ythee return after an absence of three years, and taste
a little

* A chair of state.

† A small town in the diocese of Arles, at about five leagues distance from Aix; and where the archbishop of Arles, who in these letters is always stiled the coadjutor, had his residence at that time.

a little of your native air. If your family have any regard for your health, they ought to consult what may tend to its preservation. I say nothing to Mr. de Grignan, he can hardly suspect me of not thinking of him.

LETTER CCVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 10 November, 1673.

I LOVE you too well, my dear child, to be happy here without you. Alas! I have brought Provence and all your affairs along with me; *in van si fuage, quel che nel cor si porta* *. I am a proof of this who do nothing but languish after you perpetually. I cannot bring myself to a proper resignation to the will of Providence, in the disposition he has thought fit to obscure with respect to us; never sure did any one stand in so much need of the succours of religion as I do; but my dear let us talk about our affairs.

The Abbe de Grignan, la Garde, and I, have been to pay a visit to your first president †, he is come back from Orleans, he kissed the king's hand the day before yesterday, when his majesty told him, that he would have strange turbulent spirits to deal with in Provence. He is a man that will restore a good understanding on all sides, he is a man in short, that——. But I am really quite tired of thinking that you receive none of my letters yet, but those which I wrote upon the road; good God, will you never speak our tongue? alas! my dear child, what a distance there is between my fire side and yours! How happy was I when I was there! I felt the joy in its full extent, and so I have nothing to upbraid myself with, nor did I part with it till the last extremity.

The queen desired *Quantova* * to let her have one of her Spanish women to be about her, that was not yet set out with the rest †, which she readily granted; and

* In vain we fly, what in our hearts we bear.

† Mr. Marin, then just nominated to the chair in the parliament of Aix.

* A fictitious name used by Madame de Sevigne, for Madame de Montespan.

† This alludes to a ridiculous vanity of expression, which prevailed at that time among young officers of distinction.

and it has so delighted the queen, that she declares she shall never forget the obligation. I am greatly surprised that Madame de Monaco has not yet sent me any compliments on your account. I have received a great many visits and marks of civility from Versailles. My son is in excellent good health. Mr. de Turenne is still in *my Son's Army* †. They are at Philippsbourg, the Imperialists are very strong; you know, I suppose, that they have thrown a bridge across the Maine; I found poor Guitaut in such a fluster about all this news, that I thought he would have died; I told him that nothing would have prevailed on me to have quitted Provence, but the dislike I had to hearing of affairs at second hand, and not being able to see them with my own eyes. The Abbe Tetu is very fond of Madame de Coulanges, but only till you return, he says; I sup almost every night with her. Mr. de Coulanges's cabinet is three times as beautiful as ever it was; your little pictures are in their full lustre, and very properly disposed. Every one here entertains the most respectful and friendly, I had almost said tender remembrance of you; but this latter sentiment ought not to become common. I embrace M. de Grignan, and wish him all possible happiness. Here is Brancas who embraces you, and Mr. de Caumartin, who does not embrace you; but has just had an admirable conversation with honest Mr. Marin the father, concerning the instructions he is to give his son, with regard to the behaviour he is to observe towards Mr. de Grignan.

* L E T T E R CCVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 13 November, 1673.

I RECEIVED my dear child's long, good, and admirable letter of the 5th inst. by the Chevalier de Chaumont, I know the nature of these kind of dispatches, they ease the heart; and are written with an impetuosity, that gives a great pleasure to the writer. Of all those to whom such packets are sent, I am certainly

† Every thing being ripe for a rupture at that time between the two courts of France and Spain, the subjects of each were recalled.

tainly the chief, to give them the proper reception, and to enter into all the little delicacies of sentiment they contain. I read yours with our dear d'Hacqueville, whom, as I said before, you cannot too much love; he is very angry that you should suffer yourself to be so far carried away by resentment; he would have you speak smoothly and stab home as your adversaries do: or if that appears a conduct too base for you to adopt, he would have you at least take care of your words, and controul your expressions of resentment, and that above all things you never think of employing Mr. de Pomponne, about any thing that we write to you in private, for the source is easily known, and never fails to be attended with the hatred of the person who thinks himself thus laid open, I therefore beg you will be cautious in this particular. If you imagine yourself to be any otherwise than on a very good footing in this part of the world, you are greatly mistaken; nevertheless we look upon it as absolutely necessary, that you should come up with Mr. de Grignan. As to the coadjutor's journey, we think it may serve to amuse him agreeably enough, but is not in the least necessary to your affairs, and would therefore be ridiculous if undertaken on that account. If you cannot get your *Conge*, better not let any of the family appear, but suffer every thing to lie quiet till you can return. You must depend upon d'Hacqueville and la Garde, supported by Mr. de Pomponne, to know when it will be proper to ask your *Conge*. The first president of Provence does not pass for a nephew of Mr. Colbert's, I cannot think where you picked up the relationship; he is the son of M. Marin, who bears the title of Chataigneraie, and was intendant at Orleans, that is all I know about it. I wrote you word that we had been to pay him a visit; he is the person with whom you must regulate your pretensions. Be persuaded, my dearest child, that M. de Grignan will always be able to stand his ground, provided he does not overthrow himself.

You entertain a higher notion than we do here, of the present which Madame de Montespan has made Madame de la Fayette. It is a little writing desk of St. Lucca wood, very prettily ornamented indeed, and

a cru-

a crucifix quite plain. As the fair lady is fond of being thought generous, she amuses herself in making these kind of presents to the ladies of her acquaintance, but I cannot see that it is of any great value or consequence to our friend. I have just learned that your first president is no sort of relation to Mr. Colbert, only his sister who is to marry the Marquis d'Oppede, is daughter to his father's third wife, who was sister to Mr. Colbert of Torron; this is their pedigree.

But, my dear child, when I reflect what a situation I am in, at two hundred leagues distance from the field of battle; when I wake in the middle of the night and consider of all this, I cannot shut my eyes afterwards; I think that you will be continually tormenting yourself about affairs here, for want of knowing truly how they go; and that may perhaps occasion you a fit of sickness: would to heaven you was on the spot with me! It would be of more service to you than being at Lambesc. Monsieur de Chaulnes is returned, but is to follow after the states, and the others remain at Cologne*. M. de Lavardin called to see me during the short stay he made here; that is another friend that I shall bring into play at his return. I don't neglect matters with Madame de Coulanges, and the Abbe de Tetu; that channel is already taken care of, and sufficiently answers our wishes, but we must be a good while before we can pretend to strike any complete stroke.

M. Chapelain † is dying, he has a sort of apoplexy, which has taken away his speech; he confessed by squeezing his confessor's hand in answer to the questions he put to him, he sits upright in his chair like a statue. Thus does God confound the pride of the wise.

L E T T E R CCIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 17 November, 1673.

WE make the most here of the castle of Orange, Monsieur de Garde, who knows it, is apprehensive that it will hold out longer than people imagine, so

* France had at that time plenipotentiaries at Cologne, to assist at the negotiation of peace.

† Chapelain the poet, who wrote the Maid of Orleans (*la Pucelle d'Orleans*) whom Boileau has so severely lashed in his Satires.

so that if M. de Grignan is fortunate enough to finish the siege in a short time, it will turn out greatly to his credit; and if the troops he has with him, should not prove sufficient, no one will be surprised at the delay, nor throw any blame upon him. The first president of the court of Aids, was by my fire side when the Abbe de Grignan came in from Versailles; I wish you could see how heartily he entered into our interests, I'll answer for him he will not easily be the dupe of La Greve*.

I supped with Dangeau at Mad. de Coulanges', where we had a great deal of talk about you; he swears that if he had not met with you at Aix, he would have carried the princess his ward † to Grignan; he had been mentioning you to her all the way from Modena; the poor lady is dreadfully afflicted with a dysentery. Affairs in England do not go as could be wished; the parliament are not fond of this alliance, and are bent upon a rupture between England and France. There is much talk of a cessation of arms; if that should take place, I would not have you hesitate an instant about coming. Your first president will set out about Lent. The prince and the duke are returned, and Goerville also. A thousand compliments await you from Madame de la Fayette's, and the good folks there, with whom you continue in high reputation and esteem.

L E T T E R CCX.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 20 November, 1673.

I AM just returned, my dear, from Versailles, where I have been, as it were, in a veil. I have seen nobody but Mr. de Pomponne; we dined alone with him; his wife and his sister-in-law were at Pomponne. After dinner, we talked together a full hour, considering and reasoning upon what was to be done, in order to leave the assembly at liberty of deliberating in spite of the opposition. You would have been charmed with Mr. de Pomponne, if you had seen in what manner he entered into all this reasoning, and into the choice of what is most for your advantage. I never saw so agreea-

* A cypher.

† The princess of Modena, who was then on her way to Paris.

ble a friend; for such he shewed himself to-day in perfection. After having maturely considered this affair in a thousand different manners, d'Hacqueville and he, with all the leisure and application that could be desired; they concluded, that we ought to wait till the siege of Orange was ended, in order to make that a favourable occasion of rendering this opposition odious; and to stay till the opposition was begun, because it would be time enough then for his majesty to order it to be deliberated upon. The assembly is not yet brought to a conclusion, and that is sufficient. They thought, that to speak of it at present, was to begin too soon about a thing which was not yet done, and which perhaps never will be done. And as the affair of Orange is not yet ended neither, so the expence that will be made in it will not have so much weight, till the success of it appears: so that there might be reason to fear an unfavourable, or at least an undeterminate answer: whereas there may be such a dextrous turn given to the affair in a few days, that you will doubtless have reason to expect a satisfactory determination of it. Mr. de Pomponne is very much concerned at the excess your divisions are carried to; he is persuaded that the Intendant will hinder the opposition; and that the assembly will have freedom of deliberation. It is impossible to write in stronger terms than he has writ on this subject, and that even to the Bishop of Marseilles himself. He resolves to have you all together after the assembly is over, and to make a perfect reconciliation between you. Leave it to him when it is proper, or not, to demand your conge; you need not fear his doing any thing at an improper time. He has never been desired or had the least thought of leaving to any others, beside yourselves, the care of opening, or of holding the assembly: these are empty imaginations. He thinks you are long in setting out for Orange; it is the general subject of discourse here; and you are obliged to Mr. de Vivonne, and to Mr. de Gordes, for not treating it as a trifle; and for saying, that if you should not succeed with your pitiful regiment of Galerians, and your embroidered gentry, who serve only for the decoration of the siege, it would not be in the least surprising.

All

All my friends are got into a rote of telling me that I am handsome; they perfectly teaze me: I believe it is for no other reason but that they are at a loss to find any other discourse to entertain them with. Alas! my little eyes are quite sunk into my head; I have the vexation not to be able to sleep till five in the morning; and after all this they pretend to admire me. Our friend de Hacqueville does not write to you this evening; but I herewith send you the news he had writ for you in the morning. He is very well contented with our little journey, though we have done nothing. It is no small matter to be determined; and to know what we have to do.

MONSIEUR the Prince and the Duke his son are returned, very well pleased that your imagination is no longer obliged to travel over Flanders in search of them. Had they not already made an ample provision of laurels, those they have gathered this year would not be sufficient to defend or to adorn them. Bon is taken: which is all that has been done this campaign. M. de Turenne is desirous to return home, and to put the army, in which my son is, into winter-quarters: all the officers say, Amen.

Mr. de la Rochefoucault does not stir from Versailles; the King sends for him, and makes him sit by Mad. de Montespan to hear the rehearsal of an opera, which will surpass all that we have yet heard; you must come and see it. We make no doubt of your having your conge, nor of the necessity of your coming hither with the Bishop of Marseilles; we have been saying, that you may both of you come up in the same coach. In a word, expedients must be found. Do not neglect consulting upon every occasion Monsieur the Archbishop*; he is the source of good sense and wise expedients; and if you had him not in your family, you ought to go in search of him, to the farthest part of Provence. There are occasions when his presence would perhaps have a great effect. I am persuaded that he would spare neither his pains nor his health to be serviceable to you! When I consider that the bi-

* The Archbishop of Arles, who in these letters is always styled the Coadjutor.

shop spends his money. I cannot comprehend that he has any thoughts of yielding. As for an agreement between you, I wish it, and shall always continue wishing it, though I should only consider the mischief this quarrel does to your person, and to your temper. I am not the only person who is in these sentiments. My dear, I am devoted to you, to Mr. de Grignan, and the Coadjutor. You do well in loving me: I defy you all to love better than I do.

L E T T E R CCXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 24 November, 1673.

I ASSURE you, my dear, that I am very much disturbed about your siege of Orange: I can have no quiet in my mind, till Mr. de Grignan has extricated himself out of that ridiculous affair. It was thought at first, that no other ammunition besides roasted apples would be wanting to carry on that siege. Guilleragues said it was only a duel, a single combat between Mr. de Grignan and the governor of Orange, and that Mr. de Grignan ought to be proceeded against as a duelist, and to lose his head. We have made the truth a little appear in opposition to these ridiculous witticisms: and Madame de Richelieu, with her usual goodness, told the King at dinner, how the case stands, Several persons are rightly informed of it at present; and people begin now to go from one extreme to another, and to say, that Mr. de Grignan will not succeed in it; and that he ought not to undertake to force two hundred men, well furnished with cannon, since he has no other troops than those pitiful Galerians, who are not much esteemed for a siege. MONSIEUR the duke, and Mr. de Rochefoucault are persuaded that he will not get the better of them. You know the world is always in extremes. The event will determine every thing: I wish it may prove successful. I can have no joy or tranquility, till I know the end of it: I should be very sorry, if Mr. Grignan should be worsted in this little expedition.

I have made your compliments to Brancas; he is persuaded, that you would not at present be proof against any one, who could offer you the suffrages of two consuls.

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. for

fils. Madame la Connetable Colonne was found upon the Rhine in a boat amongst some peasants; she was going I do not know whither, into some remote part of Germany. Mademoiselle de Meri acquaints me, that she has the head-ach so violently, she cannot write to you: she therefore begs me to make her amities to you. Those you make to me in all your letters are so extremely natural, that scarce any thing else is talked of, but the excess of our mutual tenderness and affection. I have in my pocket, letters of Mr de Coulanges, and of Mr. d'Hacqueville, which speak of nothing but me. It is true, that I have enjoyed more of your friendship and affection in my voyage, than I should have done in all my life. I perceived it very plainly, and that time was very pleasant to me; you can scarce comprehend the uneasiness I suffered in seeing it pass away so swiftly. You are too grateful, my dear; alas! for how slender obligations! when I consider that all my good will to you produces nothing real, I am ashamed of what you say in return to it: it is true, that my intention is good, and that it gives me sometimes such happy turns of expression, when I am speaking of your interests, as would not be disagreeable, if I had power or influence equal to my fluency of speech.

We were stopped short the other day by Mr. Pomponne, who assured us that he had writ to the Intendant, to desire him, that if he could not hinder the opposition, he would at least leave to the assembly the liberty of giving their opinions: we did not then dare to let him understand that we desired something farther. But as I am continually thinking on your affairs, I told Mr. d'Hacqueville, that I desired once for all to be able to make a judgment of the difficulty there would be of speaking to the king of this affair, in order to know what might be depended on, and to endeavour to get free from that servitude, which the Bishop of Marseilles knows how to make use of in so generous a manner. Mad. de la Fayette encouraged us in this design; and to-morrow we are to set out, he and I alone, without any other intention than to dine with Mr. de Pomponne, and consider what turn it will be proper to give to this business. We

intend to go purely on this single design, without admitting a thought of any thing besides; we will see neither King nor Queen; I shall be in a plain dress, and we will only pay a visit to Mr. de Pomponne himself. When one thinks of paying one's court, it gives a certain distraction of thought, not at all suitable to our design: I will return a few days after to pay my devoirs. To-morrow the great d'Hacqueville and I are to have only you in our thoughts; I shall return in the evening, and write to you.

I saw Madame de Souliers yesterday, with whom I had a great deal of talk: she told me that Bodinor was entirely in the interest of the Bishop of Marseilles; I replied, that I did not believe it; she assured me that she knew it very well; I said we should see. She told me a hundred little things, which made me grow pretty warm; but as you have no need of being provoked more than you have already been, I shall not acquaint you with them.

I have never suffered more inquietude than I feel at present, as well for the siege of Orange, as for your affairs at the assembly; I am more taken up with them than if I was with you.

The Marquis de Souliers came to-day to see me, with little la Garde, who is in my opinion very agreeable; you may tell Madame a Presidente what I say of him; they are all of them setting out from hence in a few days. I am of opinion that Mr. de Souliers is going to lift himself under the banner of St. Ursula, and he will probably increase the number of your enemies. Farewell, my dear, till to-morrow evening at my return from Versailles.

LETTER CCXII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday November 27, 1673.

YOUR letter, my dear, appears to be written in the style of a conqueror; you had it all in your head when you was writing, you had gained all your causes. Your enemies seemed to bow the head before you; you saw your husband set forth at the head of the

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drapello eletto *, and you breathed nothing but success from the Orange expedition. The sun of Provence is sovereign, when in its meridian, to dispel the most gloomy vapours ; in short, your present humour shone forth in every line of your letter. May heaven preserve you long in this excellent disposition. You are not to be blamed for seeing things in this light where you are ; nor are we for looking on them here in a different one. You think the advantage is all on your side ; we wish it as ardently as you can do, and in that case we are equally against an accommodation ; but supposing that money, which is the ruling god in all these things, should deceive you in your reckoning, you will then I fancy agree with us in owning that we should embrace all expedients ; so that you see we do not always think alike, on account of the distance we are at from each other ; distance indeed ! to me the most mortifying circumstance of my life.

There are many people curious to know how you will get out of the affair of the syndichip. You may believe me, that the loss of that little battle will have a different effect here, to what it will in Provence. We let slip no opportunity of saying, in proper times and places, all that should be said relating to the great expence Mr. de Grignan is at, and the great assiduity he shews for his majesty's service, and how much he is beloved in his province. Yet all this while your presence, let me repeat it to you, your presence is absolutely necessary here ; not only with respect to your own affairs, but on one particular account that makes me greatly desire to see you here this year. The abbe is desirous of settling accounts with me, relating to my guardianship ; now this can only be done in the presence of the children to whom one was guardian. My son will be here, if you will come : judge then of the pleasure you will give me in doing it. Besides, it would be imprudent to delay an affair of this consequence ; the abbe is old and infirm, and may die suddenly, in which case I shall not know how to turn myself, and shall be exposed to all the quirks and quibbles of the Brittany

* The sacred banner ; alluding to an expression in Tasso's Jerusalem.

lawyers. You will have time to conclude your assembly ; but after that I must insist upon this mark of your esteem, that I may die in peace.

The queen dismissed all her women yesterday. No one can tell the reason why. It is imagined that there was one whom she wanted to get rid of, and so, in order to make no distinction, she parted with the whole. Mad. de Coetlogon * is with Madame de Richelieu ; la Mothe †, with the Marechal ; la Mark ‡, with Madame de Crussol ; Lud e and Dampiere || return to Madame ; du Rouvrai is with her mother, who has taken her home with her ; Lannoi § is going to be married, and seems quite happy ; and as for Theobon ** I fancy she will hardly stick on hands. This is all I know of the affair at present.

The Abbe Tetu is very well pleased with what you say to him through me. You stand exceedingly well with the Archbishop of Rheims : Madame de Coulanges is not quite on such a good footing with the brother †† of that prelate, so you may look upon that channel as stopped up. Brancas is altogether yours ; and you are beloved in the tenderest manner by Madame de Villars. La Garde and I have at length seen your first president ; he is a very well made man, and of an agreeable countenance. Besons says, he would make an excellent bull-dog if he had a mind to bite : however, he received us with great civility ; we made him compliments on the part of Mr. de Grignan and yourself. There does not want people who say he will be a turn-coat, and love your family better than the Bishop. *Le flux les amena, le reflux les emmene ¶*. Did not I inform you that the Chevalier de Buons §§ was here ? he is just come from Brest, and in his way passed through Vitre,

* Afterwards Marchioness de Cavoie.

† Afterwards Duchess de la Forfe.

‡ Afterwards Countess de Lanion.

|| Afterwards Countess de Moreuil.

§ Afterwards Marchioness de Montruel.

** Afterwards Countess de Beuvron.

†† Mr. de Louvois, minister for war affairs.

¶ The tide of fortune brought them in, the ebb will carry them back.

§§ Captain of a man of war, and cousin-german to Monsieur de Grignan.

Vitré, where he had an excellent dialogue with Rahuet ; he asked who Mr. de Grignan was, and who I was. Rahuet made answer, " that Mr. de Grignan was a man of great distinction, and the principal person in all Provence, but that it was at a plaguy distance ; and " that Madame (meaning me) would have done much better to have married her daughter a little nearer to Rennes." The Chevalier was highly diverted with this account of the family. Adieu, my dearest child. I am much your's. This is a truth nearly akin to that of two and two making four.

* L E T T E R CCXIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 1 December, 1673.

THIS same siege of Orange is as displeasing to me as it can be to you ; what a ridiculous and expensive undertaking ! The only good thing that I see in it, is the proof given of the love and attachment the province has to M. de Grignan, by the number and rank of those that attend him on this expedition*. This will cut his enemies to the soul ; but still let him do what he will, the affair will bring him neither profit nor reputation. I heartily wish it was once well over.

I supped with *Quanto's* fair friend † ; you may depend upon it you will meet with a very good protection, if you are attacked in that quarter. She spoke of you in terms of the greatest tenderness and regard. She declared that she had never met with any one who so completely suited her taste as yourself, and that no one can exceed you in amiableness and justness of understanding and person. She expressed a great regret for your absence, and in a manner not to be suspected. Her brother is not in the least in Madame de Coulanges' good graces. Volonne has purchased Purnon's place of Maitre d'hôtel to MADAME : this is a very pretty settlement, and thus has Providence seen fit to settle Madame de Volonne. It is certain that *Quanto* finding the queen's bed-chamber a

* All the nobility of any consideration in Provence followed Mr. de Grignan on this occasion.

† Madame de Scarron.

den of Hydra's, thought it the surest way to cut them off at once. What is not done to-day, may be done to-morrow.

It is affirmed for certain that Mr. de Vivonne is to have the post of colonel-general of the Swiss guards *, and Mr. de Monaco is named to succeed him as general of the gallies. The new opera is in the highest vogue ; every creature you meet with is singing part of it. The king declared the other day, that if he was at Paris, he would not miss a night : a declaration which will be worth a hundred thousand franks to *Baptiste* †.

Mr. de Turenne has got his *Conge*, and his army is going to be put into winter quarters. I shall expect your brother now every day, and your ladyship in a short time afterwards, if you have ever so little value for me. The Abbe Tetu lets no occasion slip in which he can do you any essential service. He is another of my men that I have thoroughly undeceived. My sweet child, have a little care of your health, above all things endeavour to get sleep, and to banish from you at night all such thoughts as are apt to keep us awake.

LETTER CCXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 4 December, 1673.

WELL, I am at length relieved by having the siege of Orange taken off my mind ; that was an additional load to my usual burden of thought, which is very troublesome to me. Nothing now remains but the syndical war ; I wish it was already over. I supposed you would not delay entering upon it as soon as the little battle of Orange was over. You cannot think what a curiosity there was to be informed of the success of this curious siege. It was talked of in the rank of news. I embrace the conqueror of Orange, but shall make him no other compliment than that of assuring him, that it is with the sincerest joy that I find this little adventure has taken so happy a turn : I heartily wish he may

* This post, which was vacated by the death of the Count de Soissons, was in a short time afterwards given to the Duke de Maine, from whom it descended to the Prince de Dombes, his son.

† Lully.

may meet with the same success in all he undertakes, and am truly his. D'Hacqueville sends me word, that he would have Mr. de Grignan write to the king; I wish this letter was, by virtue of magic, already in Mr. de Pomponne's hands, or Mr. de Gardé's, for I am afraid lest it should not come a propos. The business of the syndichip has taken possession of my brain, since the siege of Orange has left it. We supped yesterday again with Madame de Scarron and the Abbe Tetu, at Madame de Coulanges'. We had a great deal of chat, in which you had your share. We fell upon a frolick of conducting Madame de Scarron, at midnight, to the very farthest end of the Fauxbourg St. Germain, a great way beyond Madame de la Fayette's, almost as far as Vaugirard; quite in the country as it were. There she lives, in a very fine large house §, the entrance of which is forbidden to every one: there is a very large garden, very beautiful and spacious apartments: she has an equipage, servants, and a genteel table. She is dressed with a decent magnificence, as a woman who lives among people of rank and condition: she is in herself amiable, handsome, good, and free from affectation; and, in a word, an excellent companion. We returned very merrily, in the midst of a number of flambeaux, and in full security from thieves.

Madame d'Heudicourt ¶ is gone to pay her court. It is a long time since she was seen in this part of the world. Every one thinks, that if she was not big with child she would soon resume her former familiarities; so by that it is imagined that Madame Scarron has no longer so great a resentment against her as formerly. However her return was brought about by other people, and is no other than an indulgence on good behaviour. The little d'Heudicourt * is as pretty as an angel; she has been of her own head at court for this week past, and always by the king; this little creature enlivens every mind by her presence: she is the prettiest piece of coquetry

§ This is the house where the king's children, which he had by Madame de Montespan, were brought up, under the tuition of Madame de Scarron, their governess.

¶ Bonne de Pons Marchioness d'Heudicourt.

* Afterwards the Marchioness de Montjou.

coquetry that ever was seen : she is but five years old, yet she knows as much of the court as those who have been there all their lives.

A person was telling the Dauphin the other day, that there was a man in Paris, who had lately shewn a master-piece of workmanship, in making a little cart which was drawn by fleas : the Dauphin, turning to the prince of Conti, asked him pleasantly, Cousin, who do you think made the harness ? Oh, replied the prince, some spider of the neighbourhood. Was not this pretty ? The queen's women still continue dispersed ; it is said that they intend to make ladies of the palace, ladies of the bed-chamber, and ladies of the table. The whole, however will be reduced to four of the palace, which will be the Princess d'Harcourt, Madame de Soubise, Mad. de Bouillon, and Madame de Rochefort ; but nothing certain as yet. Adieu, my dear child. I would have confessed yesterday, but a very able and good man refused me absolution, on account of my enmity to the bishop : if your confessors do not treat you in the same manner, they are a parcel of ignorant people, and know nothing of their duty.

Madame de Coulanges embraces you. She would have wrote to you to-day : she continues to do you all the service that lies in her power, and suffers no opportunity to slip her. She is heartily rejoiced at the taking of Orange. She goes now and then to court, but never without saying something handsome of you.

L E T T E R CCXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 8 December, 1673.

I MUST begin, my dear, by telling you of the death of the Count de Guiche : this is the chief subject of discourse here at present. This poor youth died of sickness and fatigue in Mr. de Turenne's army ; the news of it came on Tuesday morning. Father Bourdaloue went to acquaint the Marshal de Gramont with it ; who feared it at the first sight of him, knowing the declining state of his son. He made every one go out of his chamber (he was then in a little apartment he has near the

the convent of the Capuchins), as soon as he found himself alone with the father, he threw himself upon his neck, telling him he guessed but too well what he had to say to him; that it was his death-stroke, and that he received it as such from the hand of God; that he lost the true, the only object of all his tenderness, and all his natural inclination; that he had never had any sensible joy, or any violent grief, but for the sake of this son, who had in him something extraordinary. He threw himself on a bed, as no longer able to support his grief, but without weeping, for heroes are not permitted the relief of tears. The father wept, who all this while had not said a word. He began to comfort him with some religious discourse, in which he employed his well known zeal and eloquence. They were six hours shut up together; after which the father, to induce him to make a complete sacrifice, led him to the church of these good Capuchines, where a vigil was said for his son. He entered the church fainting and trembling, supported more by the crowd, that pressed round him on every side, than by his feet; his visage was so much disfigured with grief, that he could scarce be known. MONSIEUR the Duke saw him in this lamentable condition, and related it to us at Madame de la Fayette's, not without tears. The poor Marshal returned at last to his little apartment, where he remains like a man under sentence of death. The King has writ to him. No body is admitted to see him. Madame de Monaco * is entirely inconsolable, and refuses to see company. La Louvigni † is likewise incapable of receiving comfort, but it is only because she has not the least affliction. Do not you admire the luck of this creature? She is in a moment become Duchess of Gramont. The chancellor's lady ‡ is transported with joy: the Countess de Guiche § behaves admirably well; when they tell her all the kind things her husband said, and the civil excuses he made to her when he was dying; she says, he was a very amiable man;

I should

* Catherine Charlotte de Gramont, sister to the Count de Guiche.

† Maria Charlotta de Calteinau, sister-in-law to the Count.

‡ Relict of the late Chancellor Seguier, and grand-mother to the Countess de Guiche.

§ Margaret Louisa Susan de Bethune Sulli

I should have loved him passionately, if he had loved me in any degree ; I suffered his contempt with grief, and his death touches me with the tenderest pity ; I always hoped that he would change his sentiments with regard to me. This is certainly true ; there is not the least fiction in it. Madame de Verneuil * feels a real concern on this occasion. I believe it will be sufficient, if you only desire me to make your compliments to her ; so you need only write to the Countess de Guiche, and to la Monaco and la Louvigni. As for d'Hacqueville, he has been desired to go to Frase, thirty leagues from hence, to tell the news to Madame la Marechale de Gramont, and to carry her a letter writ by this poor gentleman a little before he died. He has made an ample confession of all the faults of his past life ; he has repented, and asked pardon in a public manner. He desired of Vardes to pardon him, and has sent to tell him a great many things which he may be the better for. In a word, he ended the comedy very well, and has left a rich and a happy widow †. The Chancellor's lady is thoroughly sensible, as she says, of the little satisfaction this poor lady must have had in this marriage, that she thinks of nothing but repairing this misfortune ; and if she could find some Ethiopian king, she would part with every thing to marry her grand-daughter to him. For our part we are at a loss for a proper match for her. You will perhaps name for her, as we have done, Mr. de Marillac ; but neither he nor she have the least inclination to each other : the other two are too young. Mr. de Foix is reserved for Mademoiselle de Roquelaure. Think a little for us : for the affair is pressing. I have sent you, my dear, a tedious account of little particularities, but you tell me sometimes that you like such minute histories.

The fame of the taking of Orange sounds very agreeably here for Mr. de Grignan. The great number of gentlemen drawn thither by their attachment for him, the vast expence, and, above all, the success, for that is the

* Charlotte de Segnier, mother to the countess de Guiche : was she married first to the Duke de Sulli, and afterwards to Henry de Bourbon duke de Verneuil.

† She was married afterwards to the Duke de Lude, in 1688.

the principal point ; all this does honour to Mr. de Grignan, and gives a sensible pleasure to all his friends, who are not a few here : this general approbation is very agreeable. The king said at supper, ' Orange is taken ; Grignan had seven hundred gentlemen with him ; they fired from within the walls, and the third day they surrendered. I am very well satisfied with Grignan.' This discourse has been related at large to me ; la Garde can recite it with greater exactness.

As for your archbishop of Rheims, I do not know what to make of him. La Garde would have mentioned to him the expence you have been at : good ! says he, the expence ! this is always the story ; people love to be complaining. But, sir, said la Garde Mr. de de Grignan could not avoid being at a vast expence, considering the great number of gentlemen who came together for his sake. You should say for the service of the King. That is true, sir, said he, but there was no order for it ; it was to oblige Mr. de Grignan by serving the King, which was the design of that assembly. In a word, my dear, this is nothing ; you know that he is in other respects a good friend ; but there are some days when the spleen prevails, and those days are unlucky.

I have news from our states of Brittany. The Marquis de Coesquen has thought fit to attack Mr. d'Harouis ; he was pleased to say, that he alone was rich, while all Brittany was oppressed with poverty ; and that he knew persons much fitter to fill that post than he. Mr. Boucherat, Mr. de Lavardin, and the whole province were ready to stone him ; they were perfectly struck with horror at his ingratitude ; for he has a thousand obligations to Mr. d'Harouis. Upon this he has received a letter from Mr. de Rohan, ordering him to go to Paris, for that Mr. de Chaulnes was commissioned to forbid him to be present at the states ; so he disappeared the evening before the governor arrived ; and he remains in disgrace there for the impious accusation he designed against Mr. Harouis. This, my dear, is what your title of Governess of Brittany obliges me to inform you of.

I am just come from visiting Mr. de Pomponne ; he was alone ; I was two hours with him and Mademoiselle

selle l'Advocat, who is very pretty. Mr. de Pomponne very well comprehended what it was we desired of him, in case a courier should come, and I am sure he will do it: but he says one thing that is true, which is, that your syndic will be chosen before the breaking up of your council is heard of; he believes it is done already. Were I to go about to tell you the many agreeable and obliging things that were said in your favour, and the engaging conversations I have had with this minister, not all the paper in my desk would suffice. I am perfectly satisfied with him, and I desire you to be so upon my word; he will be much pleased to see you, and depends much upon your return.

We read with pleasure a great part of your letters; you have been admired as well for your style, as for the interest you take in these affairs. Say not a word more to undervalue your manner of writing: we think sometimes our letters must be confused, because we are embarrassed with a thousand different thoughts: but all this confusion passes in our own heads, and the letter comes out distinct and natural: it is thus all yours, are.

L E T T E R CCXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 11 December, 1673.

I AM just returned from St. Germain's, where I have been two whole days with Madame de Coulanges and Mr. de la R. F. at whose house I lodged. On the evening I went to pay my court to the Queen, for the first time since my return; her majesty said a thousand obliging things to me about you: but if I was to tell you all the how-d'ye's and compliments, that I have had both from men and women, old and young, who crowded about me to inquire after you, I should never have done: and how does Madame de Grignan do? and when are we to see her in Paris again? and this and that and t'other; in short, child, only figure to yourself, that being in the middle of a crowd of idle people, who having nothing else to do, would every one ask me their question, I was frequently obliged to answer a score at a time. I dined with Madame de Louvois: there was a dispute who should be first to invite me.

I would

I would have returned yesterday, but we were stopped by force to sup with Mr. de Marillac in his enchanted apartments, with Madame de Thianges, Madame Scarron, Mr. le Duc, Mr. de la R. F. Mr. de Vivonne, and a band of heavenly music. This morning, with much ado, we got away.

There has happened a quarrel lately at St. Germain's. You must know the Chevalier de Vendome and Mr. de Vivonne both made their addresses to Madame de Ludre. The Chevalier took it in his head to oblige Mr. de Vivonne to quit the house; this was resented by the latter, do you not think with reason? Upon this the Chevalier insists upon Vivonne's fighting him; Vivonne makes a joke of it. No: there is no joke in the case, fight him he must; he mounts his courser, and appears armed cap a pie in the field of battle: but what is higher than any thing that ever was of the kind, is Vivonne's reply to the person who brought him the challenge: he was at that time in his own room, very bad with his arm, and receiving the compliments of several people of fashion, who were come to visit him on the occasion, for every creature was on his side. "I, gentlemen, *says he*, I fight him! he may fight me if he pleases, but I defy him to make me fight him. Let him get his shoulder broke, let him be under the surgeon's hands for a while, and be cut eighteen or twenty times, as I have been, and let him cry out, fight me! and then, *continued he*, perhaps we may be friends again. But is the man a fool, to think of drawing upon me? a pretty project truly! He may as well draw upon a great tree*. I repent, however, of having saved his life at the passage of the Rhine; I'll do no more such generous actions, till I have the nativity cast of those I intend to assist; would any man alive have thought, when I was remounting this fellow, that in a few weeks afterwards he would want to run me through the guts for my kindness?" This he said in such a manner and with such a tone, that there is nothing else talked of at St. Germain's.

I have had two hours conversation, at two different times with Mr. de Pomponne. He exceeds my fondest hopes.

* Mr. de Vivonne was excessively bulky.

hopes. Mademoiselle l'Avocat is of our council: she is a very amiable person. She knows our affairs of the syndicate, our procurator, our gratuity, our opposition, our deliberation, &c. as well as she does the map and the interest of princes, that is to say, she has them at her fingers ends. You know how displeased we have been here at the loss of a town, I don't know its name, when we had been rejoicing ten days before, upon the news of the Prince of Orange's having raised the siege; but this is one of the misfortunes of distance. Adieu, my dearest child: I embrace you most affectionately.

L E T T E R CCXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Tuesday 15 December, 1673.

BE persuaded, my ever dear girl, that my telling you would not be the less esteemed for not having interest enough to make a syndic of your own, and endeavouring to make the gaining that point of as little consequence as possible, was the effect of pure policy, and of a premeditated design between us here, that in case you should be defeated in your engagement, you might not hang yourself out of vexation; but now that I find by your letter, that you have gained the victory, and have come off triumphant, I will put off the mask, and confess to you, that it is the luckiest circumstance that can be to have carried your point in spite of all the vigilance, precaution, entreaties, menaces, solicitations, bribery, and boastings of your enemies: it is in truth a delightful thing, and shews, as well as the affair of Orange, of how great consideration Mr. de Grignan is in his province. Mr. de Pomponne, d'Hacqueville, Brancas, the Grignans, and a number of your friends, were particularly anxious about the issue of this affair; and were far from looking upon it in so indifferent a light as I would have had you thought they did. But this was only, as I told you before, put on to support you in case of a defeat.

You give me sufficiently to understand the obstacles that are in the way to your journey to Paris; but when I reflect that the Coadjutor is really to set out, he who had disposed of his abbey for two years, who was for
turning

turning off all his servants and his horses, to live a retired country life, and taste the sweets of a pure air; when I see him, I say, ready to obey the summons, and exert a kind of magic art against all objections, I cannot help expecting something of the same kind from you; and this year or never. I expect my son every day.

I dined yesterday with Mr. le Duc, Mr. de la R. F. Madame de Thianges, Madame de la Fayette, Madame de Coulanges, the Abbe Teru, Mr. de Marillac, and Guilleragues, at Gourville's. You were celebrated there, and much wished for by all parties. After dinner we were entertained with Despreaux's art of poetry. It is a master-piece in its kind. Mr. de la R. F. receives no other marks of favour than what are shewn to his son: he was the other day at Madame de Montespan's, he came in just as they were going to have a concert; they insisted upon his sitting down; could they well avoid it? Mad. de la Fayette fees Madame de Montespan for a quarter of an hour, when she goes once a month to St. Germain's: this is no great favour, in my opinion. The Chevalier de Vendome has desired quarter of M. de Vivonne, who has never ceased lashing him for his misplaced courage, but always by declaring his own aversion to fighting! it has been granted, and they are reconciled, and no more is said of the affair. Soyecourt * asked Vivonne yesterday, *when the king was to go a hunting?* When, replies Vivonne † smartly, *are the gallies to sail?* I am upon a very good footing with his generalship; he does not think he shall get the *Suisses* ‡: he said as I did, that they were *speaking arms*. Madame de la Valiere talks no more of retiring, it is enough to have said it once; besides her woman fell at her feet to dissuade her from it, and then you know there was no holding out.

D'Hacqueville is just returned from stabbing the Marechale de Gramont with the news of the death of the Count de Guiche; and seems himself so oppressed with grief at it, that he is quite unfit for company;

I much

* He was Grand-veneur, or chief-huntsman to the King.

† Who was general of the gallies.

‡ See the letter of December 1.

I much question whether he will write to you to-day. I have Corbinelli here with me, who is as earnest in your concerns as he used to be at Grignan. Despreaux is here too, who will enchant you with his verses; he seems greatly affected with the condition of poor Chapelain. I tell him he is tender in prose, but very cruel in verse §. Adieu, my dearest child. How much should I be obliged to you, if you would come and embrace me a little! There is a great rout at our states in Brittany. You are wiser your way than we are. Bussi has had orders to return to Burgundy; he has not been able to make peace with his principal enemies; he continues obstinately bent upon marrying his daughter to the Count de Limoges*; it is like joining hunger and thirst together; but he is enchanted with the name. I expect your brother every moment.

L E T T E R CCXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 18 December, 1673.

I WAIT for letters from you with a just impatience. I cannot be easy till the Marquis de Buous † is confirmed syndic; it is what I am in full hopes of, but as I am strangely subject to fears, I should be heartily glad to have it over. I have had a conversation lately with Mr. de Pomponne, who is very well pleased to see the power you have in Provence, both over the gentry and parliament as well as among the commons, all which he will take care to set in a proper light when occasion offers.

I have received your letter of the 10th: I think I have answered it before-hand, by assuring you that you will meet with nothing from hence to injure you; but why don't you finish quickly? why don't you make haste to take this thorn out of our feet and your own? we shall share with you in the joy of your triumph.

The

§ See his ninth Satire, where he lashes Chapelain most unmercifully.

* Charles Francis de Rochechouart, son to the Marquis de Chandenier, who had been first captain in the king's body-guard.

† N — de Pontevéz Marquis de Buous, cousin-german to Mr. de Grignan.

The Rain * joined in opinion, the other day, that nothing in life so sensibly affects us, as what touches our honour; and we concluded with the Bishop of Agen, that this could proceed from nothing but the most profound humility. I give you my word, no one can enter more cordially into your interests, nor understand them better than our worthy *Rain*: ah! how many comical things I have told him, and how kindly he gave me the hearing? He waits with impatience to hear the end of your syndicate: then pr'ythee make an end of the affair, and let us have a letter to put us out of all pain.

You will be surpris'd perhaps to hear that you was spoken of for a *dame dupalais* †. I tell you so however; that is sufficient. You are held in great esteem in those places that are of the greatest esteem. So pray seek for some other excuse, when you would next threaten me with not returning hither. I guess at your fine weather; I can see it from hence, and remember it with all tenderness: as for our parts here, we are at present starved with cold; in a very little time we shall be drowned. It is certain, my dear, that my journey into Provence has attached me more than ever to you. I had never seen you so long together, never enjoyed your wit and generous heart so fully; I neither see nor feel any thing but what I tell you, and pay severely for my past delights. D'Hacqueville is in the right to say he desires to experience no such sensations; for my part I am very well contented with them, would God give me grace to love him in a greater degree than I do you; but I assure you, this same circumstance of robbing the Creator to bestow on the creature, is the source of frequent uneasy reflections. *The Rain* and I were talking very seriously upon this head yesterday: good heavens! how pleased am I with this *Rain*, and I believe he is no less so with me; we find a secret joy in renewing former connections.

All our German heroes are coming back, and I expect Sevigne continually. Adieu, my dear countess. Embrace Grignan for me, and do it with tenderness.

L E T.

* La Pluye, a fictitious name for Mr. de Pomponne.

† A lady of honour to the Queen.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 22 December, 1673.

THERE is a piece of news just now come into my head, with which, contrary to my custom, I shall now entertain you. You know that the King of Poland * is dead. The Grand Marshal †, husband to Mademoiselle d'Arquien is at the head of an army against the Turks; he has lately gained so full and compleat a victory over them, that fifteen thousand were left dead on the field of battle, two bassas are taken prisoners, and he himself lodges in their general's tent. After so distinguished a victory, it is not in the least doubted that he will be declared king, especially as he is at the head of such an army, and that fortune generally declares in favour of numerous battalions. This piece of news has given me a sensible pleasure.

I never see the Chevalier de Buons now. He has been violently disgusted at not being made a *Chef d'escadre* ‡. He is at St. Germain's, and I am in hopes that he will manage his affairs so as to get his desire at last: I am sure I sincerely wish it. The Archbishop has wrote to me with assurances of the joy the affair of Orange has given him, and that he is in hopes that of the syn-
dicat will end no less happily. He finds himself obliged to own, by the event, that your vigour was of more service than his prudence, and that from your example he is become a perfect bravo. This diverted me exceedingly.

But, my dearest child, I am under terrible apprehensions, lest the over-fatigue you undergo, from stirring yourself so warmly in M^r de Grignan's affairs, should do an injury to your health. You appear to me now and then all thin and pale, and perfectly worn out: for heaven's sake be careful of yourself, for more lives than your own hang on your care. Adieu, my dearest child, I am very impatient to hear from you; you always seem to be ready to throw yourself into the fire to give me
a proof

* Michael Koribert Wiefnowieski, who died November 1673.

† John Sobieski, elected King of Poland May 20, 1673.

‡ A rank at sea, somewhat inferior to that of our rear-admiral.

a proof of your regard and love for me; but, my dear, there are other proofs far less dangerous, and, in my opinion, full as convincing too; these, and these only, I require at your hands.

LETTER CCXX.

To the Same.

Paris, Sunday 24 December, 1673.

IT is a long time, my dear, since I have felt a joy equal to that which I experienced about eleven o'clock last night. I was at Mad. de Coulanges' when word was brought me that Janet* was arrived; I immediately hastened home to receive him, and the moment I saw him, flew to embrace him, and, half out of breath, cried, Well, have we a syndic? is it Mr. de Buous. There was I out of my little wits. The next thing was to read your letters; that done, I immediately sent to d'Hacqueville, to acquaint him with every thing having succeeded to our wish, and with Mr. Janet's being come. D'Hacqueville returned me a long letter, wishing me joy, and expressing his own. Then Mr. Janet and I had a little conversation together, after which he went to supper, and then retired to his rest; as for me, I did not close my eyes till past four o'clock: joy is no great composer of the senses. Mr. de Pomponne was with me yesterday. This is all that I have to tell you at present, but between this and to-morrow, that I send away my pacquet, there will probably be a considerable augmentation of news.

By eight o'clock this morning my chamber was full; there was la Garde, the Abbe de Grignan, the Chevalier de Buous, the *Worthy*†, Coulanges, Corbinelli, &c. all discoursing, and arguing, and reading your accounts, which are indeed admirable. There never sure was a more delightful conclusion: ah! such success! such success! could we have thought this at Grignan? the most we hoped for was a suspension: and yet, contrary to all belief, one little month has overturned the project of the whole year, and that a formidable project too, since it was backed with offers of money! I am very fond

* A gentleman greatly devoted to the Grignan family.

† The Abbe de Coulanges.

fond of the Consul of Colmar, who, in return for the great services you did him last year, failed you at the only time you wanted him: I hope, my dear, you will let this pretty instance of ingratitude make an article in the book we are composing in praise of that virtue.

We cannot but own the good Bishop to be very skilful, he always keeps on the right side; he found your party too strong for him, and that you would doubtless name Buous, and he names Buous likewise. All your friends here are of opinion that you should now alter your style, and be as modest after victory, as you was bold during the contest.

You are in high fortune, but still you must think a little of this part of the world as well as of Provence. You will never meet with such another year, as well on account of the interest I have here at present, as of your own; though I must acknowledge, that I have hitherto been of very little service to you, how earnest soever my desires may have been: the truth is, that the Coadjutor's good fortune, which has brought him in abbeys, and your own successes together, have done you the most real good: I don't know how he disposed of his natural indolence during this affair, he seemed to have sent it at a pretty great distance from him, and his vigilance, application, foresight, expedients, courage, and good judgment, were of no small advantage to you: I have had a great confidence in him; but for your part, what wonders have you not done? and my dear count too, how gloriously has he behaved? In short, you have all three played your parts to admiration. There were ten or twelve persons who sent to me every day for news about the syndicate; accordingly I have been obliged to dispatch no less than ten billets this morning, to Madame de Verneuil, the Bishop of Meaux, Madame de la Troche, Mr. de Brancas, Madame de Villars, Madame de la Fayette, Mr. de la R. F, Mr. de Coulanges, and the Abbe de Tetu; every one of whom would have had reason to be offended, if I had not acquainted them of an event in which they seemed to take so great an interest.

I must now go to confession, for the conclusion of this affair has put my mind in so happy a situation, that I
am

am as meek as a lamb, and the father will be so far from refusing me absolution, that he will give me a double one, if I ask it. I am persuaded that you have not been neglectful of this duty on your side.

Monday, Christmas-day.

HA! ha! mighty well indeed! what are we got back to our lamentations for the Count de Guiche? Why, my dear child, he is in a manner forgot: nobody thinks about him, not even the Marshal, who goes to court again as usual. As for your princess, as you say indeed, after what she has already forgot, there is no great danger of her dying with grief. Madame de Louvigni and her husband are entirely happy: the Countess de Guiche would be glad not to marry again, but there are great temptations in a *Tabouret*. The Marshal's lady is the only one that continues to grieve now; and she, poor woman, does it sincerely. You will by this time have received two or three of my letters, full of uneasiness about the syndicate, at which you cannot choose but smile; but then in return I have this of yours about the Count de Guiche; and so set one against the other: absence and a great distance naturally beget these anachronisms. But to business.

Mr. Janet is gone this evening to St. Germain's, that he may be ready there against the arrival of Mr. de Pomponne to-morrow; I have wrote that minister a long letter, in which I beg him to remark in what a light you stand with the nobility, parliament, and commons of your province, and to do you the good offices on that head, which can alone be done by a person in his place. I have spoken to some intelligent people about the silence of *the Sea**; they imagine it only proceeds from want of thought, and that he cannot but be pleased at the taking of Orange, since *the North*† seems to be so. I would not have you think that the brother of *the Sea*‡ is so fond of him as to adopt all his sentiments; every one speaks his own language, and follows his own humour, so you are not to mind any thing that has been said by the brother. The gentleman you mention to me is misinformed; *the Sea* is better than

* Monsieur de Louvois.

† Monsieur Colbert.

‡ The Archbishop of Rheims.

ever, and there has been no material change in this part of the world. Madame de Coulanges and two or three female friends have been to see *the Thaw** in her great house, but they saw no one else †. I intend to go there myself one of these days, and then I will let you know all that is to be known. What you write me about your growing weary of being no longer employed in animosity, is very comical; your employment is taken away, and now you are at a loss what to do. Good Lord! why go to sleep, it is as good a thing as you can do; for Mr. Janet tells me you hardly ever close your eyes. I desire, however, my dear child, that you will endeavour to make up for the sleep you have lately lost.

L E T T E R CCXXI.

To the Same.

Paris, Thursday 28 December, 1673.

I BEGIN my letter this day, but I shall not finish it till to-morrow. I shall set out by a few reflections on your journey to Paris. You will find by Janet, that la Garde is the person who sees the most necessity for you to come, and has even said that it was necessary to solicit for permission: perhaps he may have already obtained it, for Mr. Janet has seen Mr. de Pomponne. But, say you, there is no necessity for coming; and then you proceed to give me such strong reasons against it, and make every thing appear so inconsiderable that others laid the greatest stress upon to enforce this journey, that I am quite overwhelmed; I know in what manner you argue, my dear child, and I have not the force to contradict you, especially when you ask me, “if it be possible that I, who ought to consider more than any other person the plan of life you have laid down, would go to embark you in such an expence, which may be attended with very disagreeable consequences, considering how much you have already to support,” and so on. No, my love, I would not do you such an injury; God forbid! and while

* Madame Scarron.

† That is, the King's children did not appear, to whom Mad. Scarron had been lately appointed governess.

while you shew an example of reason, wisdom, and philosophy itself, far be it from me to give occasion to the world to accuse me of being a foolish, fond, and inconsiderate parent, who, for the sake of a little satisfaction to herself, would, through an excess of womanish tenderness, overturn and ruin the most prudent and rational schemes. But remember, my dear, you had promised me to come; and when I consider the expences you must necessarily be at while at Aix, in balls, plays, entertainments, and feasts during carnival-time, I cannot but think that it would cost you less to come here, especially as you will have no occasion to bring any thing with you. Mr. de Pomponne and Mr. de la Garde have pointed out a thousand little affairs, in which your presence and Mr. de Grignan's will be absolutely necessary, not to mention that of the guardianship; I am all ready to receive you. My heart has fondly indulged itself in the pleasing hope; you are not with child, and you stand in need of a change of air. I even flattered myself that Mr. de Grignan would have left you with me this summer, and have saved you the fatigue of two months journey in one year, which is only fit for a man to attempt. All your friends and mine concurred in allowing, that I had the greatest reason to expect you with impatience. These were my motives; but these, all these, my dear, appear to you false and ill judged; I yield then to necessity and the force of reasoning, and will endeavour, to the best of my power, to follow your example and submit. I will look upon it as a punishment inflicted upon me by Heaven for my sins; a deeper could not well be found, nor one that would so effectually reach my heart. But I must make the sacrifice that is required at my hands, and resolve to pass the remainder of my life, separated from the only person in the world who is truly dear to me, the only one who completely answers my taste and inclination, and makes the better part of myself. But all this must be given up to God, and I will do it with a good grace, and with a becoming adoration of his Providence, who has seen fit to join to the pleasing reflections of the happy and flourishing situation you are in, the poignant stings of absence and separation. These are my real sentiments without affectation or

exaggeration. And now the conflict is over, and I will not say a word more upon the head, but meditate in silent admiration on the wonderful strength of your reason and judgment, which it shall be my utmost endeavour to imitate.

Janet went to meet M. de Pomponne at Port-Royal; let him tell you only the manner in which he was received, and the pleasure that great man expressed on hearing that Buons was chosen. You will hear it all from a letter which Janet has wrote to his wife.

There is no sort of finesse in the manner in which Mr. de Rochefoucault and his son, *Quantova* *, her friend †, and her friend's friend ‡, are at court; there is no sort of connection between them; the son || is lodged extremely well; it was all done under the pretence of a supper: he is, as you know, on a very good footing with *the North* §, but nothing more than usual; his father does not go to that part of the world once in a month, nor Madame de Coulanges either. There is not the least view or design in any thing; this is fact. I made all your *animosities*, as you drolly call them, to Corbinelli, and they were very well received by him. I fancy he is come here to awaken a little the affections of his old friends. My son is just arrived, so I shall close this letter, and we will write to you both together to-morrow, and fill it full of news that I shall get from St. Germain's. It is said that the Marshal de Gramont will not see either Louvigni or his wife; they came here from a country-seat of theirs, about ten leagues off. We think no more of the Count de Guiche now, than if there had never been such a person in the world: you certainly joke us with your long grief; we should never have done, if we were to dwell so long upon every fresh occurrence of this kind that happens here. We are more expeditious, be you so too.

LET.

* Madame de Montespan.

† Madame de Scarron.

‡ Madame de Coulanges.

|| The Prince de Marillac.

§ Monsieur Colbert.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 29 December, 1673.

MR. de Luxembourg is a little pressed near Maeftricht, by the army of Mr. de Montereil * and the prince of Orange ; he does not dare venture to remove his camp, and he must perish where he is, unless they send him speedy and effectual succours. The Prince is to set out in four days time with the Duke and Mr. Turenne ; this latter is to serve under the two Princes, and there is a perfect good understanding between all three. They have twenty thousand foot and ten thousand horse ; the volunteers and those companies which are not to march do not go, but all the rest set out. La Trousse and my son, who arrived here yesterday, are to be of the number : they have scarce had time to pull off their boots, and here they are all in the mud again : the rendezvous is appointed at Charleroi on the 16th of January. D'Hacqueville has written you word of all this, but you will read it rather plainer in my letter †. This is certainly very important news, and has occasioned a great hurry every where. We know not what to do for money. It is certain that Mr. de Turenne is not very well with Mr. de Louvois, but that does not appear ; and while he continues to keep in with Mr. Colbert, there will be nothing said about it. This afternoon I had some of the beau monde with me, who earnestly desired their compliments to Mr. de Grignan, and to *Grignan's wife*. These were the Grand-master and the *Charmer* §, besides Brancas, the Archbishop of Rheims, Charot la Trousse, &c. who all say every thing to you that can be said. They talk of nothing but war. The *Charmer* knows all our affairs, and enters admirably into our little perplexities. He is governor of a province, that is sufficient to give him a notion of one's feelings on those heads. Adieu, my dearest child. I participate in all the joys of your conquests.

* Governor of the Spanish Low Countries.

† Mr. d'Hacqueville wrote a hand very difficult to be read.

§ The Count de Lude and the Duke of Villeroi.

Monsieur de Sevigne.

I ARRIVED yesterday about noon, and the first news I heard was that we were to set out again immediately for Charleroi; what do you say, my dear sister, to this pretty joke? We storm, we swear, and are obliged to set out at last. Our spruce courtiers are just at their wits end about it. They have laid out the finest plan in the world for passing their time agreeably in Paris, after an absence of twenty months; and now their projects are all overturned at once. I had much rather have gone to assist Mr. de Grignan in his siege of Orange, than to go to the north; what did he finish his duel for so soon? I am vexed that he had such a speedy victory.

I don't know whether you complain of me still. but I forgive you, in consideration of the multiplicity of affairs you have had in your hands, and on such occasions only I allow you to forget a guidon. O such a ridiculous title! after a man has carried it about with him for five years. Adieu, my pretty little sister. You imagine, I suppose, that I think of nothing but resting or diverting myself; but I beg your pardon, my dear: are my horses ready? are my boots ready? I want a better hat, *piglia lo su signor monsu*. This is the trade all day long: has this the appearance of a return, after an eight months campaign?

L E T T E R CCXXIII.

To the Same,

Paris, Monday, New Year's day, 1674.

I WISH you a happy year, my dear; and in this wish I comprehend so many things, that I should never have done, if I should enter into particulars. I have not yet asked leave for you to return to Paris, as you feared; but I wish you had heard what la Garde said of the necessity of your taking a journey hither, that you may not lose your five thousand francs, and of what he thinks proper for Mr. de Grignan to say to the King. If it was a suit which you was obliged to solicit against any one who designed to do you such an injustice, you would doubtless come to solicit it; but as it is to come to a place where you have a thousand other affairs, you are both
of

of you guilty of the greatest indolence. Ah ! what an enchanting thing is indolence ! you feel its power too much ; read la Garde upon this subject, chapter the first. Consider, in the mean time, that you would have the pleasure to see the King, and to receive his approbation.

I will know whether any thing can be done for your friend, who has assassinated a man in so handsome a manner. The edicts are revoked, which gave us so much uneasiness in our province. The day that Mr. de Chaulnes declared it, there was a cry of Long live the King, which made all the states weep for joy ; they all embraced one another ; they broke out into the highest expressions of rapture ; they ordered Te Deum to be sung ; they made bonfires ; and the thanks of the public were given to Mr. de Chaulnes. But do you know what we are to give the King ? six hundred thousand livres, and as much more by way of voluntary gratuity. What think you of this little sum ? You may judge by this of the favour that has been done us, in taking off the burthen of these edicts *.

My poor son is arrived here, as you know ; he is to return on Thursday, with several others. Mr. de Montereau is a man of great capacity ; he disturbs the whole world ; he fatigues the army, and puts it out of a condition to take the field, and begin the campaign, till the end of the spring. The troops were all at ease in their winter-quarters ; and when they have made a tedious winter-march to Charleroi, he need only take a step to retire. In the mean time Mr. de Luxembourg cannot have his elbows at liberty. If, when we are in the field, we could make an insult upon some great town, or if the enemy would come out and oppose our two heroes, as in all appearance we should beat them, a peace might in a manner be depended upon. This is what is said by the gentlemen of the profession.

Adieu, my dear ; your tenderneſſes charm me, and I have the happiness to believe that you love me.

* The English reader will draw the parallel with pleasure, between the glorious privileges of a British parliament, and the unhappy condition of these states, who were so much transported with joy for a little relief from their oppression, purchased at so great a price.

There are five ladies of the palace made, which are Mesdames de Soubise, de Chevreuse, the Princess d'Harcourt, Madame d'Albret, and Madame de Rochefort; the maids are to serve no more, and Madame de Richelieu is also discharged as a lady of honour. There are to be only the gentlemen in waiting and the maitres d'hotel, as formerly. But that the Queen may not be without women, Madame de Richelieu and four other ladies are to wait constantly behind her chair. Brancas is in raptures that his daughter † is so well provided for.

The Grand Marshal of Poland has sent a letter to the King, in which he tells his Majesty that if he has any person in view to raise to the crown of Poland, he will assist him with all the forces under his command; but if not, requests his protection and assistance for himself; the King has promised it to him; however it is imagined he will not get himself elected, because he is of a different religion to that of the nation.

The devotion of la Marans is the most sincere and unaffected you have ever beheld; she is perfection itself, she is all divine; I have not been to see her yet, for which I hate myself: a certain female acquaintance of hers told her, that Mr. de Longueville had a real affection for her, and that he had prophesied that she would become a saint. This made such an impression on her, that she immediately set about a reform in her life, resolved, if possible, to fulfil the prediction.

There is nothing to be seen of the little Princes*. The eldest has been three days with papa and mamma; he is very pretty, but no one has seen him. I embrace you, my dearest child. I will know whether any thing can be done for your friend, who has killed his man in so handsome a manner.

L E T T E R CCXXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 5 January, 1674.

IT is about a year since we supped with the Archbishop; at present, perhaps, you sup with the Intendant: I am afraid, my dear, you do not make a sincere debauch

† Madame la Princesse d'Harcourt.

* The King's children by Madame de Montespan.

debauch there. All that you say on this head to me, and to Corbinelli, is admirable. My heart thanks you for the good opinion you have of it, in believing it has an abhorrence of all villainous proceedings. You are not deceived in it ; the Bishop's manner of acting strikes me with horror.

Mr. de Grignan tells you true ; Madame de Thiange has left off red, and hides her bosom ; you would hardly know her in this disguise. She is frequently with Madame de Longueville, and is the very pink of the modish devotion. But she is still good company, and has not at all the air of a recluse. I dined with her the other day ; a servant brought her a glass of a rich sort of wine ; she turned to me laughing, and said, the fellow does not know that I am become a devotee ; she was very diverting. She speaks very naturally of her intentions, and of her change. She is very cautious of saying any thing that may injure the reputation of her neighbour ; and stops short when any thing of that nature escapes her ; for my part, I think her more agreeable than ever. People venture to lay wagers that the Princess d'Harcourt will not turn nun these twelve months, now that she is become a lady of the palace, and returns to the use of red : the abstaining from this same red is the law and the prophets ; it is the great point that our new devotion turns upon. As for the duchess d'Aumont, her taste is burying the dead. They say the duchess de Charot kills people for her, with ill-compounded medicines, and then buries them in a religious retreat. The Marchioness d'Huxelles is truly good ; but la Marans is more than good. Madame de Schomberg tells me, very seriously, that she is of the first in rank for penitence and devout retirement, not admitting any society, and refusing even the amusements of devotion ; in a word, she is a penitent in the true sense of the word, and in all the simplicity of the primitive church.

The ladies of the palace are kept under great subjection. The King has explained himself upon this head, and will have the Queen always be attended by them. Madame de Richelieu, though she does not serve any longer at the table, yet is always present when the

Queen dines, with four ladies, who wait by turns. The Countess d'Ayen * is the sixth : she is very uneasy under the confinement of paying this attendance, and being constantly at vespers, sermons, and other religious ceremonies ; but there is no perfect happiness in this world. As for the Marchioness de Castelnau, she is fair and blooming, and perfectly recovered from her grief, and, as they say, has only changed her apartment at court, very much to her satisfaction. Madame de Louvigni does not seem pleased enough with her good fortune. She is thought unpardonable for not adoring her husband in the same manner as when she was first married : this is the first time the public was ever offended at a thing of this nature. Madame de Brissac is beautiful and discreet, and still about the princess of Conti. La Coesquen is still the same as you have seen her. She has a petticoat of black velvet, thick embroidered with gold and silver, and a manteau of brocade. This habit cost her an immense sum ; and when she seemed to herself to make the most splendid figure imaginable, she was thought to be dressed like an actress. She has been so well rallied upon it, that she dares not wear it any more.

We were a few days since, Madame de la Fayette and I, to see Mr. de Turenne ; he has a little fit of the gout. He received us with an excess of civility, and talked much of you. The Chevalier de Grignan has given him a relation of your victories ; he would have offered you the assistance of his sword, if there had been any occasion for it. He intends to set out in three days. My son parted hence yesterday, much out of humour : I was not less so at a voyage undertaken with so little reason, and so disagreeable upon all accounts.

MONSIEUR the Dauphin saw Madame Schomberg the other day ; they told him his grandfather had been in love with her : he asked in a whisper, how many children she had by him ? They replied, by instructing him in the modes † of that time.

Monfieur

* Mary Frances de Bournonville, afterwards Marchioness de Noailles.

† That is to say, the chaste manner of Louis XIII. in caressing his mistresses.

Monsieur the Duke de Maine † has been seen at court, but he has not yet visited the Queen: he was in a coach, and saw only his father and mother.

The Chevalier de Chatillon is no longer to be put in competition; his fortune is made. MONSIEUR chose rather to give him the charge of Captain of his guards, than to Mademoiselle de Grancei that of *Dame d'Atour*. This young man has the post of Vaillac, and is well provided for: they say that Vaillac is to have that of d'Albon, and that d'Albon is discarded; but there is nothing certain but the first article, of which I will not say a word more.

I do not see any room for demanding a pardon for that honest gentleman who assassinated the man; the action is of too black a nature. The criminals who were pardoned at Rouen, were not of this quality; it was the only crime reserved. Beavron has acquainted the Abbe de Grignan with it.

I have heard the ladies at the palace described in such a manner as made me laugh. I said, with Montagne, *Let us take our revenge of them by speaking against them*. It is however true, that they are under an excessive subjection.

The report still holds good, that the Prince sets out on Monday. The same day Mr. de Saint Luc espoused Mademoiselle de Pampadour: it is a thing that gives me no manner of concern.

Adieu, my dear; this letter is growing too long; I conclude it for no other reason, but because it is fit every thing should have an end. I embrace Grignan, and I beg him to excuse me for opening Madame de Guise's letter, I had a mind to see her style; my curiosity is satisfied for ever.

Guilleragues said yesterday, that Pellisson abused the permission men have to be ugly.

L E T T E R CCXXV.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 8 January, 1674.

NEVER did I see more delightful letters than your's, my dear countess; I have just been reading one, which has charmed me: I have heard you say, that

† The King's eldest son by Madame de Montespan.

that I have a way of giving an agreeable turn to the most trifling things. I am sure, my dear, I may with justice say that of you. There are five or six passages in your last letter, that have an energy and sweetness that there is no resisting. I do not know where I must begin to answer you.

I have a great inclination to talk to you a little about your fine fun, and your delightful walks. You may well say I am married a second time in Provence; I shall certainly make it one of my countries, provided you do not strike this out of the number of yours. You say a thousand obliging things to me on the coming in of the new year; as for me, I have passed it over in a brutish silence, without saying a syllable to you on the occasion; but be assured, my dear child, that this and every year of my life will be one continued chain of love and esteem for you, till the last moment that winds up the whole. You moralize in a most admirable manner, my dear: it is certain, as you say, that time passes over every thing, and slides away with amazing swiftness. You exclaim against him, because he is always robbing you of some part of your youth and beauty, but yet he leaves you a large portion: as for me, I cannot behold him fly thus without horror, when I consider that he is every day bringing with him old age, which must soon end in death. Of this nature are the reflections of a person at my time of life; join with me, my dear child, to request of God that he give me the grace to draw the proper conclusions from it.

This so much talked of journey of the prince and Mr. de Turenne, to disengage Mr. de Luxembourg, is come to nothing at last. Mr. de Montreil has made what they call a small retreat, finding his army somewhat incommoded in its situation, so that Mr. de Luxembourg is once more at liberty. Most of our warriors are returned back: Mr. de Turenne brought back a considerable number, and M. de Luxembourg will bring the rest. There are plays and balls at court every week. The King is to dance, and MONSIEUR is to lead out Mademoiselle de Blois *, to avoid leading out

MADE-

* Maria Anne de Bourbon, married afterwards, in 1683, to Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Conti

MADemoiselle †, whom he leaves for the Dauphin. Thursday next they play the opera ‡; it is a most enchanting piece, there are some places where the music forced tears from me whether I would or no; I am not the only one who has been thus served: poor Madame de la Fayette feels the strongest emotions at it.

I frequently see Corbinelli, who is your sincere admirer, and enters fully into my sentiments for you, which does not a little add to my love for him. I have a great esteem for Barbentone; I think him one of the bravest men in the world, nay even romantically so, as I have heard Bussi say a thousand times, who was his intimate friend; they were brothers in arms. I hope soon to have news of your peace being concluded, *justitia & pax osculatæ sunt* *; do you understand Latin, child? Ah! you are too diverting, my dear! Adieu; you are remembered by every body, and in every place. Your brother is very well persuaded of the regard you have for him; and loves you with an equal warmth and affection says he, and I believe him.

* Monday, after having sent my paquet to the post.

HERE is d'Hacqueville just arrived with a piece of news, which we would have you acquainted with by this post. The Keeper of the seals § is just made Chancellor. The news will be public in three or four days: it is of some importance, and will carry a great weight with it to his party.

The Prince sets out in two days, and Mr. de Turénne likewise, though so ill of the gout, in order to be in time at the rendezvous at Charleroi. It is not true that Mr. de Montereil is retired and left Luxembourg at liberty; so we revoke that false report, and in its room give you this true one.

L E T T E R CCXXVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 12 January, 1674.

WELL, your peace is entirely concluded at last. The Archbishop of Rheims, and Brancas received

† Daughter to MONSIEUR, afterwards Queen of Spain, in 1679.

‡ Cadmus, wrote by Quinault, and set to music by Baptist Lulli.

* Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

§ Stephen d'Aligre, son to Stephen d'Aligre also Chancellor of France.

ed their letters before I did mine; and Mr. de Pomponne sent to inform me of this important piece of news from St. Germain's: I was still entirely ignorant of the particulars, but at length I am fully satisfied. I desire, child, that you will demean yourself agreeable to times and circumstances; and since it is the king's will that you should be friends with the Bishop*, you must endeavour to obey. But to return to St. Germain's: I was there about three days ago; I went first to Mr. de Pomponne's, who had not yet applied for your conge, but is to send for it as to-day. From thence we went to the Queen's, together with Madame de Chaulnes; there was nothing for any body to talk of, but me, and sure such a conversation! Her majesty began roundly, by saying that you had been absent for above three years, and that it was high time to return. From court we went to Madame de Colbert's, who is extremely civil, and perfectly well understands genteel life. We saw Mademoiselle de Blois dance, who is a very prodigy for agreeableness and the bel air. Defairs says that she is the only one who reminds him of you: he asked me what I thought of her dancing, for it was my approbation which was required, which I gave with the greatest readiness, as was indeed but justice. The Duchess de la Valiere was there; she called her little daughter *Mademoiselle*, and the young princess in return called her *pretty Mama*. Mr. de Vermandois was there too. We afterwards went to pay our respects to MONSIEUR and MADAME; the former still keeps you in remembrance, and I never fail to present your most dutiful acknowledgments to him. I met with Vivonne there, who accosted me with, *Little mama*, I desire you will embrace the governor of Champagne†. And pray who is he? said I. Myself, replied he. Yourself! and pray who told you so? The King himself has just informed me of it. Upon which I made him my compliments while the affair was warm. The Countess de Soissons was in hopes of getting this post for her son.

There

* Of Marseilles.

† This government was vacated by the death of Eugene Maurice of Saxony, count de Soissons, which happened June 7, 1673.

There is no talk of taking the seals from the Chancellor †; the good man was so surpris'd at this additional honour, that he began to fear a snake in the grass, and could not comprehend the reason of being thus loaded with dignities: Sire, said he to the King, does your majesty intend to take the seals from me? No, no, Chancellor, replied the King, go sleep in quiet. And indeed, they say, he is almost always asleep: there are many philosophical conjectures on the subject, and people cannot find out the necessity of this accumulation of favours.

The Prince set out two days ago, and Mr. de Turenne is to follow this day. Write to Brancas, to felicitate him on his daughter's being in the Queen's household, for he takes great pleasure in it. La Troche returns you many thanks for your kind remembrance of her. Her son has nose enough left to lose half of it at the next siege, without the loss being very apparent.

Do you know the Marquis de Sessac is here; that he will have a post in the army; and that he will soon be introduced to the king; this is a manifest effect of predestination: it is a piece of news that Sarbin will be much displeased with. It is said here that Mr. de Turenne has not yet begun his march, and that there is no further occasion for it, because Mr. de Monterey is at last retired, and Mr. de Luxembourg is disengaged, by the assistance of five or six thousand men, whom Mr. de Schomberg had got together, and with whom he so extremely harrassed Mr. de Monterey, that he was obliged to retire with his troops. It is expected that MONSIEUR the Prince will return, and our friends with him.

Madame de Coulanges and Barillon played yesterday the scene between Vardes and Mademoiselle de Toiras. We had all of us like to have wept; they surpassed themselves; but la Chammelai is sometimes so very extraordinary, that you have never seen any thing equal to her. It is the actress we go to see, and not the play. I went to see Ariadne acted, purely for her sake: this tragedy is very indifferent; all the actors are execrable; but

† Stephen d'Aligre was Keeper of the Seals in 1672, upon the death of Chancellor Seguier, who was made Chancellor of France in 1674.

but as soon as la Chammelai appears, a pleasing murmur is heard, all the world is charmed, and we already weep her distress.

Mr. le Chevalier de Loraine paid a visit the other day to la Fienne; she pretended to act the forsaken maid, and appeared embarrassed. The Chevalier, with that open frank manner I am so much pleased with, said to her, Mademoiselle, what is the matter? why do you look so melancholy? is there any thing extraordinary in what has happened to you? We have loved, and we now cease to love; constancy is not the virtue of persons of our age; we had better forget what has passed between us, and return to the behaviour of common life. This is a very pretty dog; who gave it you? This was the conclusion of the gallant passion between this romantic pair.

The Countess de Guiche begs me to tell you that she will not write to you, because you are coming hither to receive an answer from her. She has been to dine at court, notwithstanding the affliction of — The Queen would have it so. I was present at this scene. The King and Queen dined in profound silence: Madame de Richelieu sat at the table, and next to her the ladies according to their quality; when some are standing the others sit; those who have not dined, are ready to reach out their hands to the dishes; those who have, are ready to faint with the fumes that rise from a full table. Thus the whole company is in pain. Madame de Crussol was dressed in the excess of the modish coiffure; she is to appear next Wednesday, dressed all in rubies; she has borrowed those of Monsieur the Duke, and of Madame de Mequelbourg. I supped last night with that Princess at Gourville's, with the Fayettes and Rochefoucault; we went through the whole circle of Germany, without omitting a single principality. Adieu, my dear; I leave you to talk a little with d'Hacqueville and Corbinelli; they make no scruple of interrupting me now you are expected here.

LETTER

LETTER CCXXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday 15 January, 1674.

SATURDAY last I dined with Mr. de Pomponne, who had sent for me, and was there enchanted, transported, and enraptured with the beauties of Despreaux's Art of Poetry; d'Hacqueville was present, we spoke two or three different times of the joy we should have in seeing you. Mr. de Pomponne called to mind, that one day when you was a very little girl at your uncle de Sevigne's, you got behind a large window with your brother, and said you was prisoner, and a poor unfortunate princess drawn from your father's house; your brother, at that time as handsome as yourself (and you was as handsome as a little angel), played his part extremely well; the oldest of you could not exceed nine years. He made me remember it perfectly, and the very day it happened; he never forgets one moment that he has seen you, and proposes himself a great pleasure in seeing you again, which cannot but lay a great obligation on me. I must own to you, my dear, that I am big with excessive joy, but do not dare to give vent to it till I know your resolution, tho' it is a great task to you to make resolutions; however, you will have the pleasure to find that this has been made to your hands.

Mr. de Villars is returned home from Spain, and has given us a thousand amusing relations concerning the Spaniards, and their manners. I have at length seen la Marans in her cell, for it is no other. I found her quite in dishabille, not a single hair upon her head, with a coarse coif of old Venice point, a black handkerchief on her neck, an old grey gown, and a petticoat of the same. She seemed very glad to see me, we embraced each other tenderly. She does not seem at all changed; we began the conversation by talking about you; she appears to love you as well as she ever did, and seemed so humiliated, that it is impossible to resist loving her. We then began to discourse about the devout life she had lately embraced. She assured me, that it was true that God had vouchsafed her a great portion of his

his grace, of which she had the most grateful sense : that this grace consists in an extensive faith, and profound love for her God, a horror for the world and all its vanities, and a thorough distrust of her own weakness : adding, that she was persuaded if she was to go abroad only for an hour, this divine spirit would be all evaporated. In short, she is all that one could wish a thorough reformation to be. I was above two hours with her ; she reproached herself even for the pleasure she received in my company, but without the least affectation. She is now more amiable than ever. I hope, my dear, you will not chide me this time, for not being particular enough.

The Cardinal de Retz is just arrived, and will be very happy in seeing you. My dear child, what joy will your return give to every heart ; but to mine ! come and see what it will be to mine ! But above all things, my dear child, let me recommend to you to come prudently. I leave to Mr. de Grignan the whole management of the expedition, and I expect him to be accountable. I have wrote to the Coadjutor, to conjure him to come with you : he will facilitate our audience with the two ministers ; he will support his brother's interest. The Coadjutor is bold and fortunate, and you will mutually heighten each other's consequence : I could talk till this time to-morrow upon this subject ; I have wrote to the Archbishop, get that upon the Coadjutor, and make him receive my letter.

The Prince is come back, after having been thirty leagues on his journey. This has stopped Mr. de Turenne. It seems Montereil is tired, and Luxembourg is now at liberty. Within these twenty-four hours the chapel at St. Germain's has been robbed of a silver lamp, worth seventy thousand francs, and six candlesticks of the same metal, each of them taller than I am. This is a piece of daring insolence. The ropes they made use of, to get in, were found by the Richelieu gallery. No one can conceive how they found an opportunity of committing this theft, for there are guards continually going that way, and patrolling about all night.

Do you know that we have a talk of peace? Mr. de Chaulnes is since come from Brittany, and is to set out again immediately for Cologne,

L E T T E R CCXXVIII.

To Monsieur de Grignan.

Paris, 15 January, 1674.

I AM extremely sensible, my dear count, of your natural politeness, and the goodness of your heart, which makes you share in all the tenderness of mine; I feel the liveliest pleasure in all the obliging things you say to me in your last kind letter, and believe me, it is not merely by way of return to you for them, that I protest I would willingly have made the consideration of my own happiness give way to the solidity of my daughter's reasons, had not the interest of your own affairs declared on the side of my inclination. You know Mr. de la Garde, - and consequently can judge how likely he would be to put you both to an inconvenience merely to indulge my fond desire; had he not been convinced more than ever of the necessity of your taking this journey; you alone are the proper person to speak to the King on your own affairs. Madame de Grignan will find a way likewise to employ her abilities to the purpose, and if you can bring the Coadjutor with you, your troop will then be complete: this is not my opinion only, but that of all your friends in general. Mr. de Pomponne is of the number, and will be greatly rejoiced to see you all three. As to the rest, I leave the conducting of the march wholly to you; only let me give you a little hint, don't travel in your coach along the banks of the Rhine, and pray avoid a certain water that is about a league from Montelimart; this water is no other than the Rhone itself, which they obliged my coach to pass through last year, and you cannot think how prettily the horses swam up to their bellies: for God's sake don't laugh at my precautions; prudence and foresight are the only means to make a journey successful.

Adieu, my dear Count; I may hope then to have the inexpressible joy of embracing you soon; what do I not owe you for this favour? If I have the most sincere
friendship

friendship and warmest affection for you, I am certain that you know it is not of to-day.

L E T T E R CCXXIX.

To Madame de Grignan.

Paris, Friday 19 January, 1674.

I SHOULD be extremely sorry, my dear, if any of our couriers were to be drowned; they all bring you letters and conge's, which it is absolutely necessary you should receive. It is admirable in you to remember what I said about that same Durance. As for me, I don't forget the least circumstance that relates to you: judge then if I remember Nova, and our Spaniard, and our Carthusians, and our Grignan songs, and a thousand other things.

You say you wish I could see the state of your heart with regard to me: I am persuaded, my dear, I have no reason to suspect its being all I could wish. I know you love me tenderly; and, not to spin out this subject to an immeasurable length, I shall only tell you, that I am very angry with you for making so much of the little trifles I now and then give to my little *Pigeons* *, when you know that one of the least playthings that the Coadjutor has made them a present of, is worth all mine put together; so not a word more upon that head, if you please, while I remain guardian, though it is very true that I am going to resign that office; but I am really afraid of your *chicanerie*. Mr. de Grignan and you will find fault with every thing, and I know you are thinking of nothing at present but quarrelling with me; I am very well acquainted with you both: the *Worthy* absolutely trembles at the thoughts of it, and is in full expectation of being ill used, and yet he dies to see you here. I do love that good creature from the very bottom of my soul, for all depends on him.

Mr. de la Garde is more confident than ever that you will do wonders by your presence; and is very desirous that the Coadjutor should be of the party, for the reasons I mentioned in my last. We have made the speech
among

* Mad. de Sevigne means her grand-children here; and by her guardianship, the care of Mad. de Grignan's daughter that was left with her.

among us, in which Mr. de Grignan is to address the King; it is in such a style as we think most likely to please his majesty, that is, mild and respectful; yours is to be a little more animated: in short, we took each of your tones, and upon rehearsal found that it was just the thing it should be.

You know that the prince is returned, and so all is at an end. I expect your brother every instant. I informed you of the robbery at St. Germain's chapel; it is asserted that the King knows the thief, and has put a stop to the search: it seems it was done by a man of quality, but of his house. The princess d'Harcourt dances at the ball, and will not miss so much as one country-dance; so you may think how freely she has thrown her devotion to the dogs. My dear, that false air of godliness was only put on to get made dame de palace. A few days ago she was saying, Lord help me, I am a very heathen, compared with my sister d'Aumont; but now she says, Lord bless me, my sister d'Aumont is continually dull and melancholy; she takes delight in nothing but burying the dead. Her ladyship does not use any red yet, but very submissively declares that she is ready to do it whenever the Queen or the Prince d'Harcourt pleases to order her to do it. But neither the Queen nor the Prince have pleased to do it as yet, and so poor Lady she is forced to pinch her cheeks to give them a bloom: it is believed too that M. de Sante Beuve will enter into that expedient. But this is very idle stuff for me to be telling you; for, after all, the daughter of Brancas is sacred to me, and I beg that you will never repeat what passes between us.

The Abbe de Valbelle has just left us*. He was telling me, that yesterday at mass, his majesty, in a good-humoured way, gave his almoners a printed paper, which has been handed about St. Germain's, by an unknown author, in which the noblesse humbly request his majesty to correct the indecency of his clergy, who get together and chatter and talk shamefully loud, and turn their backs upon the altar before his majesty comes into

* Louis Alphonso de Valbelle, almoner in ordinary to the King, afterwards made Bishop of Alet, and from thence translated to the see of St. Omer.

into chapel: and that he would be pleased to order them to behave with at least as much decency when only God is present, as after his majesty is come in. This address is extremely well drawn up: the prelates are violently enraged at it, especially those who used to take the opportunity of the King's absence to talk and abuse the musicians, to the great scandal of their cloth and the church they belong to. He told me moreover, that the Archbishop of Rheims would denounce eternal enmity against the Coadjutor, if he did not accompany you to Paris. What has been lately decided in Languedoc ought certainly to weigh with you above all considerations: here now is a favourable opportunity for your affair, and Mr. de Pomponne will always be on the side of justice, which is all you require in relation to your town-house.

The story of R—— is very diverting: the good bishop fretted, and fumed, and raged, and tore, and, after all, was obliged to make the first step towards you; and you was quite right to forgive what had past.

*R—— de tes conseils voila le juste fruit **

Was it not that honest man †?

You have a letter here from Corbinelli, on the triumph of the King's lieutenants: the judgment given in this case is the most exact rule for your affair; nothing in the world could happen at a more favourable juncture; but be sure you bring copies of what is entered in your registers, for they will be of service to you; mere words signify little, when one is called upon for proofs. Every one here is in admiration at your generosity, though they all agree that nothing is lost by behaving in an honest and open manner, when one has to do with base and low-minded people as yours are.

I am yours most affectionately, my dear, and embrace as many of the Grignans as happen to be about you.

L E T T E R CCXXX.

Monfieur de Corbinelli to Madame de Grignan.

Paris, 19 January, 1674.

THE judgment given in favour of the King's commissioner in Languedoc against the bishops of that province, is an admirable precedent in your favour, my dear

* Such the effects of thy advice, O R—

† A person who was register to the states of Provence.

dear lady countess. Here is another victory, another triumph, another increase of honour and glory for us, and chagrin and vexation to our enemies; every thing will grow smoother and smoother; and if we should chance at any time to lose a point in Provence, we are sure of carrying it here: do but come to us, and we will form such deep-laid schemes of politics as shall make our foes tremble.

My lady the marchioness, your mother, has given you a proper description of the ball at St. Germain's, but this I know, that you will enliven every thing by your presence. I cannot sufficiently admire how matters fell out in the affair of R——. If you had remembered my lessons, relating to Provence generosities, you would have promised him your protection, and then have gloriously gone from your word: you could never have wanted a pretence: you quite forget all those fine maxims, and yet they are the safest in the world to follow. The king will certainly reproach you one day or another for this behaviour of yours; you absolutely sacrifice a whole province to your false notions of generosity: you may say that you could not grant the favour with any safety to your conscience, but then having once granted it, could you not have retracted it again privately? could you not have found in all the mysteries of politics, one handsome piece of deceit, to turn out this same register? O generous soul, unworthy to reign over those of Provence!

LETTER CCXXXI.

Madame de Sevigne to the Countess de Grignan.

I DO not know, my dear child, whether the hopes of seeing you soon, give me a peculiar propensity to joy and merriment, but I laughed most immoderately at what you wrote me about Pelisson. M. de Grignan and Corbinelli are enchanted with it, and whoever sees the passage, will be very happy. It is impossible to keep a thing up with greater humour than you have done, nor to retouch it with greater nicety than you do in different parts of your excellent letter. Nothing is so great a comfort to me, as the life and spirit with which you support a correspondence, that certainly cannot be equalled.

equalled. You say too much of my letters, they are nothing to compare with yours, and yet, see what an odd creature I am, I protest to you I earnestly wish to see this correspondence at an end; and in saying this, let me tell you, I set no small value on your presence.

I shall take the affair of your friend the *Assassinator*, and insert it in my book of *Ingratitude*; I think it is a very curious incident; but what strikes me most in it, is the extreme delicacy of the gentleman, who, because he cannot suffer any one to be in love with his mother, stabs his friend and benefactor. There is something very wonderful in your Provence consciences. But let us quit this subject, my dear, and talk of something more entertaining.

So you are really coming then, my child, I shall have the joy of receiving you here once more, of embracing you, and giving you a thousand little marks of my care and affection. How sweet a hope is this to an heart like mine; you are under no apprehensions, I fancy, that I should send you back again.—Yesterday when I was at St. Germain's, the ladies there talked much of your return.

The king has given the post of colonel general of one of the Swiss guards, which was the late count de Soissons* to the count de Vexin†. M. de Louvois is to act for him during his minority.

LETTER CCXXXII.

To the Same.

IXXXD Paris, Friday 26 January, 1674.

D'HACQUEVILLE and la Garde, still continue to wish for your coming, as the thing in the world that will be of the greatest advantage to your affairs; come then, my dearest child, and by your presence change the face of every thing here; *se me miras me miran*‡, this is most admirably well applied: you must set your dial to the sun, that people may look at it: your intendant will not leave Provence so soon as was imagined.

* Eugene Maurice of Savoy, count de Soissons, who died June 7, 1673.

† Lewis Cesar de Bourbon, born in 1672.

‡ An inscription for a sun dial. If you look on me, others will look on me, but *mirar* signifies to admire as well as to look upon.

imagined. He wrote to Madame d'Harbigni, that you did him wrong, in thinking that justice alone engaged him in your interests, since your own beauty and merit had a great share in it.

There was not a creature at the ball last Wednesday. The king and queen had all the crown jewels on: but as ill fortune would have it, neither MONSIEUR nor MADAME, nor MADemoiselle, nor Mesdames de Soubise, Sulli, d'Harcourt, Ventadour, Coesquen, nor Grancei, could be present, on different accounts, which was a great pity. Their majesties seemed to be a good deal vexed at it.

I returned yesterday from Merci, where I had been to pay a visit to Mr. d'Andilli. I was near six hours with him, and enjoyed all the satisfaction that could be tasted in the converse of so witty and excellent a man: I likewise saw my uncle de Seigne *, but for a little while only. That Port-royal is a perfect Thebais †, a very paradise; a desert, where all that is left of true Christian devotion, is retired. The whole country for a league round, breathes the air of holiness. There are four or five hermits, whom no one knows, that live like the penitents of St. John Climachus ‡. The nuns are angels upon earth. Mademoiselle de Vertus is wearing out the remains of a miserable life there, in the most excruciating pain, but with a resignation and patience beyond conception. The very dregs of the people thereabouts, have a virtuous serenity in their countenances, and a modesty of deportment, to be met with in no other place besides. I am every day in expectation of your brother; he writes to me in the most affectionate manner possible. But he set out before any of the rest, and he stays behind all the rest; we have a notion that this is occasioned by a certain fondness that there is at Sessanne; but as it is not of a serious kind, I am easy about it.

* M. de Andilli and M. de Seigne had for many years lived a life of retirement at Port Royal des Champs.

† A port of Egypt, bordering upon Æthiopia; the people of which were remarkable for the nature and simplicity of their manners.

‡ Remarkable for the austerity of their devotion.

It is certainly fact that M. de Villars and his people were set upon in their return from Spain, by the people of the Spanish ambassador, who was on his return to France. The dispute was ridiculous enough, the masters exposed themselves, and it went so far, that they drew upon each other: some of the servants lost their lives in the fray. Madame de Villars has received no compliments on her husband's return, but she has got him, and that is as much as she wants. M. de Luxembourg is here; there is great talk of a peace, that is to say, as we would have it in France, rather than from the real state of affairs: however, we may wish for it, you know, be things how they will.

I hope, my dear, you will be more at your ease and more determined, when once you have received your conge. There is no doubt, but that your return will prove to your advantage, and that you will here feel the good effects of it in Provence; *se me miras, me miran*. Nothing can be more applicable, I abide by that. Monsieur and Madame de Coulanges, la Sanzei, and the *Worthy*, all wish for you with impatience, and are all equally desirous with myself, that you should bring the Coadjutor along with you. I have had a number of conferences with la Garde, about you and your affairs. You cannot set too great a value on his advice. He was mentioning your affairs to Gardes the other day, who is perfectly master of them, and sets them in an admirable light, whenever an opportunity offers of speaking about them to the king. You cannot consult any one who is better acquainted with this part of the world than himself.

D'Hacqueville will send you news of what is doing in Europe, and how great a figure England makes at present in the political world. The Swiss guards are at last given to the duke de Maine *, and not to Mr. Vexin, as I told you in mine of the 22d, but in the room of it, he has the abbey of St. Germain des Pres.

LET-

* Lewis Augustus de Bourbon, the king's son by Madame de Montespan, born the 31st of March.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Thursday 1 July, 1673.

I REALLY think, my dear child, you ought to make more sure of your conge than you seem to do. M. de Pomponne's billet, which I sent to you, is a sufficient confirmation of it. A man like him, would not have undertaken to ask for any thing that he was not sure of obtaining. But by this time, I am persuaded you will have received your letters of conge, and have taken advice from the fountain of good council, I mean the archbishop, concerning the manner in which you are to conduct your affairs. You will see that La Garde advises you to bring but few attendants with you; was you to bring all those with you that would be willing to come, your journey to Paris would look like a voyage to Madagascar: you must act within bounds, and keep the due decorum of the Provence.

I suppose M. de Grignan is gone to Marseilles and Toulon: it is now a year, to a minute, since we were there together: and I imagine you think of me as you pass through Salons, and the other places where you have seen me. It is one of my greatest misfortunes, that the sight of places affect me beyond expression, they awake a remembrance that I cannot support. I endeavour to hide from you and all the world, the greatest part of that tenderness with which my heart overflows.

You mention your having received mine of the 15th, but you take no notice of the letters of the 12th, which were those you waited for with the greatest impatience, for they brought you your conge; but as you take no notice of them, I take it for a sign that you have received them.

Methinks you do not seem to make a proper dispatch in setting out. I have every creature on my back, to know whether you are upon the road or not, and what time I expect you; to all which I can give no satisfactory answer. I think you should be at Grignan now, and that you will set out to-morrow or Monday.

In short, my dear child, I think of nothing but you, and follow you every step you take. I return you many thanks for the kind promise you have made me, of not exposing yourself in your coach on the banks of the Rhone: but you say you intend to ford the Loire; you will know better than I can tell you, how to proceed when you get to Lyons: come but safe, and in good health, and I repine no more. My heart is beyond expression affected with the joyful prospect of seeing you soon. Let those go out to meet you that choose it, for my part, I shall expect you in patience at my own room, and there give a loose to all the transports of meeting, where you will find a good fire, good tapers, good elbow chairs, and a heart which is not to be surpassed in tenderness for you. I shall embrace the count and the coadjutor, and bid them both heartily welcome.

The archbishop of Rheims has been to see me, and calls out for the coadjutor with might and main. Let me assure you, that you are greatly obliged to M. de Pomponne, for the advantageous idea you maintain in his heart, and the great desire he expresses of seeing you. O my dear! here is your poor brother just arrived; the cardinal de Retz has this moment sent to inform me of it: make haste then, and come too in an happy hour.

My dearest child, I am all yours, I do not say so merely by way of concluding my letter, but as the most solemn truth in the world. Mademoiselle de Meri does not write to you; we begin to drop that sort of correspondence now, in the view of entering on one more agreeable. My son embraces you most affectionately, as I do all the dear Grignans.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Monday, Feb. 5, 1674.

IT is now a pretty many years since there came into the world a creature destined to love you beyond every other thing. I beg you not to suffer your imagination to wander either to the right hand or to the left.

Cet

* *Cet bonnette homme la, Sire, c'etoit moi-meme.*

It was yesterday three years since I felt the most sensible grief of my whole life. You set out at that time for Provence, and you remain there still. My letter would be very long, if I should endeavour to express in it all the sorrow I then felt, and what I have since felt, in consequence of it. But to leave this melancholy digression, I have received no letters from you to-day: I do not know whether I am to expect any; I fear I am not: it is too late: however, I have expected them with impatience; I was willing to see you set out for Aix, and to be able to compute, with some exactness, the time of your return. If I receive any letters from you after this is sent away, you may be very easy; for I will certainly take care to do whatever you order me.

I write to-day a little sooner than ordinary. Mr. Corbinelli, and Mademoiselle de Meri are here, and have dined with me. I am going to a little opera of Moliere's, that is to be sung at Jellison's. It is an excellent composition; the Prince, the Duke, and the Duchess will be there. I shall, perhaps, sup at Gourville's, with Mad. de la Fayette, the Duke, Madame de Thianges, and M. de Vivonne, of whom we are to take our leave, as he sets out from hence to-morrow. If this engagement does not hold, I shall go to Mad. de Chaulnes, whither I am earnestly invited, as well by the mistress of the house, as by the cardinals de Retz and Bouillon, who made me promise them. The first of these has a sincere impatience to see you; he loves you tenderly. See what a letter he has sent me! It was apprehended, that Mademoiselle de Blois had the small-pox, but it does not prove so. There is not a word said of the news from England; this makes me conclude there is nothing good from thence. There has been only a ball or two at Paris, during the whole carnival; there were masques at noon, but not many. It is a very dull season. The assemblies at St. Germain are mortifications for the king, and only shew how little diversion the carnival affords.

* A line of MAROT in an epistle to FRANÇOIS I. This honest gentleman, Sire, was I myself.

Father Bourdaloue made a sermon on the purification of our Lady, which transported every body. There was such an energy in his discourse as made the courtiers tremble. Never did preacher before himself, enforce with so much authority, and in so noble a manner, the great truths of the gospel. His design was to shew that every power ought to be subject to the law, from the example of our Lord, who was presented at the Temple. This was argued and insisted on with all the strength and clearness imaginable; and certain points were urged with a force worthy of the great apostle St. Paul himself.

The archbishop of Rheims, as he returned yesterday from St. Germain, met with a curious adventure. He drove at his usual rate like a whirlwind. If he thinks himself a great man, his servants think so still more. They were on a full trot over Nanterre, when they met with a poor man on horseback, and in an insolent tone bid him clear the way. The poor man used his utmost endeavours to avoid the danger that threatened him, but his horse proved unmanageable. To make short of it, the coach and six rush full upon them both, horse and man, turn them topsy turvy, and drive clear over them; but at the same time the coach is overturned, and almost broke to pieces. In an instant the horse and the man, instead of amusing themselves with having their limbs broke, get one upon another, and gallop over the plain, and are galloping still for aught I know; while the servants, the archbishop's coachman, and the archbishop himself at the head of them, are crying out, stop that villain, stop him, break his head, beat him to a mummy. The rage of the archbishop was so great, that afterwards, in relating the adventure, he said, That if he could have caught the rascal, he would have broke all his bones, and cut off both his ears.

Adieu, my dear. I cannot express the eagerness of my desires to see you. I shall direct this letter to Lyons; it is the third I have sent thither; the two first were to be left with the *Chamrier*. I think, my dear, you must be got thither by this time, if you ever will. Once more adieu.

Madame

Madame de Grignan, and her husband, arriving at Paris a few days after the date of this letter, the correspondence between the mother and daughter ceased during the time of their being together, and was not resumed till towards the end of May 1675, at which time Madame de Grignan took her leave of her mother, to set out for Provence, whither Monsieur de Grignan had gone before her about a twelvemonth, as may be gathered from the following letter,

L E T T E R CCXXXV.

To Monsieur de Grignan.

Paris, Tuesday 22 May, 1675.

AS I have the honour, dear Sir, to be acquainted with your good lady, and the great care she takes of compliments committed to her charge; I think it proper to let you know yourself, that I love you rather too much, and that I should be extremely obliged to you, if you would on your side endeavour to love me a little. You must allow that nothing can be more reasonable; it is absolutely giving one's love away to make a bargain of this kind.

We stand in great need of you; we have been used of late to see you return home every evening, and enjoy the pleasure of your company, than which nothing can be more agreeable: and let me tell you one thing, that is, that if one does not hate you, one must love you extremely. The heroine, whom I expect, will not return so soon; she is very dull, but I am used to see her so when you are absent. It is hotter at Besancon*, than at Toulon itself. You know how severely poor St. Geran has been wounded; and that his pretty wife, and Madame de Villars, immediately set out to see him. It was reported he was dead; but by letters of the 18th, we hear he is something better. As you are not quite at liberty to marry his widow, I presume you are very willing he should live. I have sent you one of the prettiest fables † you have ever read. Are you not acquainted-

* The king was then assisting in person at the siege of Besancon.

† A fable of la Fontaine's, called, The LYON'S COURT, (la COUR DU LYON)

ed with any person that is as compleat a courtier as the fox?

I am perfectly charmed with the praises you give my sweet little one †; I assure you I place to my own account all the fondness you shew her. Adieu, my dearest count; it is impossible to embrace you more affectionately than I do. My son sends you a thousand compliments.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

To Madame de Grignan.

Livri, Monday 27 May, 1675.

HOW dreadful is the day, my dear, which is to usher in absence! How did the last appear to you? As to me, I feel all the bitterness and grief from it that I imagined I should; and which I had so long dreaded. What a moment was that, in which we tore ourselves from each other! How bitter the farewell, how melancholy the parting between two people who are so entirely happy in each other! But I will not trouble you with any more of this dull subject, nor *celebrate*, as you used to say, all the thoughts that oppress my heart. Yet, methought, you seemed a little touched while you was embracing me*. As for my part, I returned to Paris in a condition that you may imagine: Madame de Coulanges gave way to me in every thing. I stopped first at the cardinal de Retz's, where I found my grief so violently increased, that I sent to request Monsieur de la R. F. Madame de la Fayette, and Madame de Coulanges, who were all come to see me, to excuse my receiving them. One must hide one's weakness before people of fortitude. The good cardinal entered into all my distress; indeed the great friendship and esteem he has for you makes him sympathise with me in the loss of you. He has his picture drawing by a monk of St. Victor; and I believe, notwithstanding Caumartin, he will give it to you. He departs in a few days; his secret

† Meaning her young grand-daughter, whom Monsieur de Grignan had taken with him into Provence when he left Paris.

* The mother and daughter took their leave of each other at Fountainbleau, whither Madame de Coulange, and Madame de Sevigne conducted Madame de Grignan on her way.

cret * has got wind, and his domestics are all bathed in tears.

Do not condemn me, my dear child, for what I felt when I got home. How different did every thing appear ! What a solitude ! what a gloom ! There was your room, your closet, and your picture—but ah ! the dear original was gone ! M. de Grignan will perfectly understand my meaning, and enter into all my feelings on that occasion. The next morning, which was Saturday, I was broad awake by five o'clock ; so I got up, and called upon Corbinelli and the abbe, and brought them with me hither. We have had an incessant rain, and I very much fear lest the roads in Burgundy should be broke. We amuse ourselves here with reading the maxims, and Corbinelli explains them to me : He uses all his endeavours to teach me the proper government of my heart. I shall be a considerable gainer by this journey, if I am happy enough to retain his lessons. I propose to return to-morrow ; I stood in need of this short repose, to recover my senses a little, and put my face in a condition to appear abroad.

* L E T T E R CCXXXVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 11 May, 1675.

L E T me entreat you, my dear, to be persuaded, that you have not failed in any respect. One of your reflections is more than sufficient to efface the remembrance of a crime ; much more those slight inadvertencies which would be remarked by no one but ourselves. Believe me, when I assure you, I can entertain no other sentiments of you than those of the most perfect love and tenderness, and such as will end only with my life. While at Livri, I endeavoured to learn the means of bearing off these attacks of overfondness ; but they returned with such vehemence to the charge, that poor reason sunk beneath the effort. However, I trust that the exercise of devotion, and the love of God,

* The cardinal de Retz had taken the resolution to retire to Commerci, with a design to retrench his expences, in order to pay off his debts before he died, in which he was happy enough
• succeed.

will restore peace to my troubled soul. To this consideration, and this alone you are secured.

Corbinelli has been my sole support at Livri; his turn of mind pleases me; and the earnestness with which he engages in serving me, has begot a confidence that nothing can destroy. I returned hither from Livri yesterday, and stopt at our good cardinal's, who has made himself dearer to me by the regard he expresses for you, than by any other tie that connected him before. He is full of business: he passes his Whitsuntide at St. Dennis, but is to return hither again for a week or ten days. Nothing is talked of now but his intended retreat. Every one speaks of it after their own humour, though it doubtless calls for a general admiration. Madames de Lavardin, de la Troche, and de Villars, load me with their billets and officious cares; but I am not yet in a condition to profit by their kindnesses. Madame de la Fayette is at St. Maur; Madame de Langeron has a violent swelling in her head; it is feared she will die of it.

The queen and Madame de Montespan were on Monday last in full conference, for two hours, at the Carmelites in the Rue au Bouloir; and parted seemingly very well contented with each other. I wrote to you the day before yesterday, and directed the letter to the care of the Chamarier at Lyons: I should be very sorry that it should have miscarried; for there was one for our cardinal inclosed, as there is likewise in this. Your letter is excellently calculated to reach the inmost soul. M. de Coulanges shall be made acquainted with your kind remembrance of him. It is a certain truth, that we should not lose a single moment at the time of parting; I should have been extremely sorry not to have accompanied you as far as Fountainbleau: the instant of separation was indeed terrible, but it would have been still worse here. Be under no concern, my dear, about my health; God will enable me to preserve that life; fear not the care of it, since it is the object of your love. There is no danger of those who have the gift of tears. God defend me from those sorrows that dry up the fountain of relief.

The

The marechal de Crequi is besieging Dinan. It is said that there is a disturbance at Strasbourg. Some are for permitting the emperor's troops to pass, while the others are for adhering strictly to the promise they made Monsieur de Turenne. I have had no news from the warriors. I am informed that the chevalier de Grignan has had a tertian fever; but you will hear of that more particularly from himself.

* L E T T E R CCXXXVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 31 May, 1675.

I HAVE received only your first letter as yet, my dear; but that is worth all that words can express. I have seen very few since you have been gone, my dear; those I have seen continually remind me of you: they talk to me of you; they pity me: they—but stop. Are not these of the number of the thoughts we should pass over? Let us pass over them then.

I was yesterday at Madame de Verneuil's in my way from St. Maur, where I had been with cardinal de Retz. At the Hotel de Sulli I met with Mademoiselle de Lau-noi*, who is just married to the old count de Montrevel; the wedding was kept there: you never saw a bride so pert: she bustles about the house, and calls *Husband*, as if she had been married for twenty years. This same husband of hers, you must know, is very much troubled with the ague; he expected his fit the day after he was married, but missed it: upon which Treubet said merrily enough, "We have got a remedy for the ague, but who can tell us the dose?" Mesdames de Castelnau, Louvigni, Sulli, and Fiesque were there. I leave you to guess what all these charming women had to say to me. Here are letters that will inform you of the arrival of the Coadjutor; I saw and embraced him this morning. He is to have a conference this evening with his Eminence and Monsieur d'Hacqueville on the steps he is to take. He has hitherto remained incog.

The

* Adriana-Philippa-Theresa de Lau-noi, who had been maid of honour to the queen, was married to James-Mary de la Baume Montrevel in 1675, and not in 1672, as it is said by mistake in the history of the great officers of the crown.

The Dutcheſs has loſt Mademoiſelle d'Anguyen: one of her ſons is going to die beſides; her mother is ill: Madame de Langeron is already under ground. Ample ſubjects for tears, and, as I am told, ſhe is not ſparing of them. I leave d'Hacqueville to tell you news of the war: and the Grignans to write to you about the chevalier: if he ſhould return hither, I will take as much care of him as of my own ſon. I imagine that you may be now upon the peaceable Saone: ſuch ought to be our minds; but our hearts are perpetually debauching them: mine is brimful of a daughter. I have already told you, my greateſt difficulty is that of diverting my thoughts from you, for they are all of the ſame kind here.

Ten o'Clock in the Evening.

HERE we are all together at my abbe's. The coadjutor is as happy this evening as he was perplexed in the morning. The abbe de Grignan has managed the archbiſhop of Paris * ſo well, that the coadjutor will be received as a very pleaſing and agreeable deputy: ſo he is in high ſpirits. To-morrow he is to ſee Monſieur de Paris, and will then reſume the title of coadjutor of Arles, which he has quitted for theſe latter twenty-four years for the more humble one of the abbe d'Aigueberre, under which he concealed himſelf. I am only ſorry for you, my dear, who will not have his good company, which muſt always be a loſs, but more eſpecially in Provence. The abbe is of opinion, that the chevalier's fever will be tractable enough to allow of his continuing his journey. D'Hacqueville ſays, that Dinan is given up. Adieu, my deareſt. We have a company here to which nothing is wanting but your preſence: you are moſt tenderly beloved by every member of it. This I think you need not doubt.³

LETTER CCXXXIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 5 June, 1675.

IHAVE not received any of your letters, my dear, ſince that from Sens; therefore you will eaſily conceive what an extreme deſire I muſt have to be informed

* Francois de Harlat, archbiſhop of Paris.

formed of your health, and the circumstances of your journey. I am fully persuaded that you have wrote to me, and so I complain of the management, or rather mismanagement of the post. According to the calculations of your friends here, you should be by this time at Grignan, unless you was detained at Lyons during the holydays. In short, my dear child, I have accompanied you step by step all the way, and am in hopes that the Rhone was not wanting in the respect it owed you. I have been at Livri with Corbinelli; but returned hither with all the haste I could, that I might not lose a moment that was left to see our dear Cardinal. The extreme tenderness he has for you, and the long friendship which has subsisted between him and I, have given me a sincere attachment to him: I see him every evening from eight till ten, and I think he seems pleased to have me with him till his hour of retiring: Our conversation is constantly about you; this is a subject that we are fond of expatiating upon, and which indeed seems the master-sentiment of both our hearts. He is for coming hither; but I cannot bear this house, when you are not in it.

The Nuncio acquainted him yesterday, that by a courier which he had from the Pope, he had learned, that his holiness had nominated him to a hat. The pope has lately made a promotion of his creatures; as in the number of which he is reckoned. The crowns are put off for these five or six years, and consequently M. de Marseilles†. The nuncio told Bonvoulour, who waited on him with his compliments on the occasion of his promotion, that he hoped his holiness would not now accept of the cardinal de Retz's resignation of his hat; that he shewed me all his endeavours to dissuade his holiness from doing it, as he had the honour of being his colleague: so now we have got a cardinal Spada. Ours is to set out on Tuesday; I dread that day; for I shall suffer much in the separation of so valuable a friend: but his spirits and resolution seem to increase in proportion as those of his friends fail them.

The
† Toussant de Forbin-Janson, bishop of Marseilles, and afterwards bishop of Beauvois, was not made cardinal till 1690, at the promotion by Alexander VIII.

The dutchess de la Valiere made her profession yesterday. Madame de Villars promised to carry me to see it; but by an accident we thought we should have lost out places. This was performed by the duchess, who is a woman of great beauty and spirit, like all the other actions of her life, in a noble and charming manner. Her beauty surprised all the world: but, what you will perhaps a little wonder at, the sermon was not so excellent as was expected on this occasion*.

Madame de Coulanges goes from hence on Monday with Corbinelli: this deprives me of my companions. You know how good Corbinelli is to me, and in what an obliging manner he enters into all my sentiments. I am convinced of his amity for me, and I feel his absence: but, my dear, after having lost you, what can happen to me, of which I ought to complain? It is true that you are interested in the complaints I make for his absence, because he is one of those with whom I most enjoyed the consolation of speaking of you; for, you are not to imagine, that those whom I cannot speak freely to, are as agreeable to me, as those who are in my sentiments. You seem to me to be apprehensive, that I shall make myself ridiculous, and that I am too apt to divulge my sentiments on this pleasing subject. No, no, my dear, fear nothing; I am able to govern this torrent. Trust this to me, and leave me the liberty of loving you till it shall please God to take you out of my heart, in order to place himself there; for you can yield to none but him. Do you know, my dear, that my heart is so entirely employed on you, and so full of you, that, finding myself incapable of any other thought, I have not had it in my power to perform the devotions of the season. Adieu, my dear, I shall finish this letter this evening.

I have just received your letter from Macon; I cannot read it still without being tenderly affected by it: my heart is so extremely sensible, that the least thing which touches it quite overcomes me. You may imagine that, with this fine disposition, I frequently meet with occasions to try its temper: but, my dear, you need

* It was preached by the famous Bossuet, afterwards bishop of Meaux.

need not be in pain about my health. I can never forget the philosophy you inspired me with the evening before we parted; I improve by it as much as I can; but I have such an habitual weakness, that in spite of your good lessons, I often yield to it.

Our cardinal will have left me before you will receive this; it will be a very melancholy day to me, for I am extremely attached to his person, his merit, his conversation, which I enjoy as I can, and the friendship he expresses for me. It is true, that his soul is of an order so far superior to the rest of mankind, that it is not to be expected that his life should be attended only with common events. He that makes it a law to himself, to do always what is most grand and most heroic, must place his retreat in some proper part of his life, like a shade beautifully disposed in a piece of painting, and leave his friends to lament it.

It is certain, my dear, that I must be well persuaded of your fond affection for me, since I still continue to live. The tenderness I have for you is almost inconceivable: I know not whether, contrary to my intention, I discover much of it; but I am well assured that I conceal much more. I am not willing that you should know all the surprise and all the joy occasioned by the sight of a servant, and a letter from you. I had even the pleasure to fancy that you was not ill; I was happy enough to believe it to be as it really was. I have said long since, that whenever you please, you are adorable; there is nothing imperfect in any thing you do. I write in the garden as you imagined; the nightingales, and the rest of the feathered assembly, received with great demonstrations of joy, but with very little respect, that part of your letter I did them the honour to read to them by your order; they are so proudly situated, as to be incapable of attention to what deserves the greatest regard. I was yesterday two hours alone with the Hamadryades: I talked to them of you, and received great satisfaction from their answers. I do not know, however, whether this delightful region has reason to be satisfied with my behaviour, since after I had enjoyed all its beauties, I could not hinder myself from saying,

Mais

** Mais quoique vous ayez, vous n'avez point Caliste,
Et moi Je ne vois rien, quand Je ne la vois pas.*

This is so true, that I shall leave this place with pleasure this afternoon. The rules of decency have no part in regulating my actions, which flow from a different principle: this renders the excessive liberties you give me disagreeable; I have in my heart such resources as you do not comprehend. I do not think the twenty pistoles you have won are to be regretted; this loss was well recompensed by a very great honour, and an agreeable collation. I have made your compliments to our uncles, aunts, and cousins; they adore you, and are charmed with the relation I have made to them. It was very proper to be made to them, but not at all so where I am to dine; so I hope I may be dispensed with, if I refuse to make it. I left with my porter a letter for Brancas: I see it has been forgot.

Adieu, my dearest; I conclude that I may not weary you. Alas! what a change it is, to have no other pleasure than that of receiving your letters, after having been so long accustomed to the happiness of seeing and conversing with you.

Madame DE COULANGES.

WE regret those only whom we hate; this is a truth I have learned since you have left us. We follow those only whom we hate; for Saturday next I set out upon your footsteps, and shall not be pleased with my journey till I have made a trip across the Rhine. I was to-day at St. Cloud, where I was asked after you, which gave me no small pleasure; for my hatred to you so very nearly resembles warm friendship, that I am often mistaken in it. I am M. de Giignan's most obedient servant.

** L E T T E R CCXL.*

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 7 June, 1675.

AT length, my dear, I am reduced to the solitary comfort of receiving your letters; it is true that these are very dear to me, but I cannot reflect that I have

† But whatever beauties you have, you still want Calista; and I can behold nothing with delight, when I do not behold her.

have had you yourself, and for fifteen months together, without feeling the most lively returns of tenderness and grief. There are some people in the world who would persuade me that my excess of fondness is troublesome to you, and that my continual attention to dive into your heart, wishes and inclinations, which in consequence become my own, must certainly grow insipid to you, and make you uneasy. I do not know, my dearest child, how true this may be; but this I can safely say, that I never had an intention of giving you any such uneasiness. I must confess that I have perhaps a little too much indulged my own inclination, and suffered you as seldom out of my sight as possible; and this proceeded from my being unable to debar myself of the pleasure I take in seeing you: but I had never any reason to think this behaviour was either irksome or displeasing to you, as you never gave the least signs of being weary of my company. After all, my dear girl, let me beg you to think well of the great confidence I have in you, and believe that it is impossible for any one to be more perfectly forlorn and wretched than I am in your absence; you give me most excellent advice as to the government of the passions on such occasions; I hearken to your lessons, and endeavour to put them in practice.

Yesterday I saw la Villars, who has a most sincere regard for you; we were alone, indulging ourselves in solitude at the Thuilleries. I dined in the forenoon with the cardinal, and could not help being afflicted at my not seeing you there. I had a good deal of conversation with the Abbe du Michel, to whom, methinks, we give in trust the person of his eminence. The abbe seems to me a mighty good sort of a man; he appears to have a sound judgment, and clear reason, and expresses the greatest regard for our friend; so that we hope he will be of service to him in taking care of his health, and preventing him from injuring it by an over rigid attachment to the duties of his retirement. They are to set out on Tuesday; this will be another day of grief to me, though not comparable to that at Fountainebleau.

Corbinelli

Corbinelli was with me when I received your letter, and was greatly delighted with the pains you was at to confound the Jesuits; he wished heartily to have a witness of your victory. Mad. de la Troche was charmed with what you say of her. I am going to send your letter to M. de Turenne. Our brethren are at St. Germain. I have a great mind to send you la Garde's letter, which would give you a general view of the kind of life they lead at court. I hope Paulina is well, since you do not mention her to me; I desire you will love her for the sake of her relation, Mr. de la Garde. Mad. de Coulanges has so well managed the princess d'Harcourt, that she herself begs your pardon a thousand times, for not being at home when you did her the pleasure of calling to take your leave of her. I would not have you trifle with her on this occasion. What you say about those trees which change their verdure is admirable; the unchangeableness of those in Provence* is absolutely tiresome. It is much better to grow green again, than to be always green. Corbinelli says that it is the property of God alone to be immutable, and that immutability in any other thing is an imperfection; he was in a fine cue for philosophising to-day. Mad. de la Troche, and the prior of Livri were here; and he amused himself vastly in proving to them the attributes of the Deity. Adieu, my dearest; I embrace you: but, alas! when shall I embrace you more nearly? Life is so short—— but hold! I must pass over that thought. Your letters are at present the only objects of my impatience.

* L E T T E R CCXLI.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 12 June, 1675.

I HAD the happiness yesterday of taking a solitary walk with his eminence in the wood of Vincennes; he thought the air would do me good, and as he had not much business on his hands, he proposed the party. We were four hours together, and I hope I improved that

* In Provence there are several kinds of trees that never lose their leaves, but remain green throughout the year, as the olive, the orange, the holme-oak, the laurel, and some others.

that time to my advantage : the subjects we discoursed upon were such as perfectly suited with the character of that good man. In losing him I lose the only comfort I had, and cannot help weeping for myself, and for you too, my dear, when I consider the affection he shewed towards us both.

Mad. de Coulanges set out last Tuesday very melancholy, but very well satisfied in having Corbinelli with her. Do you know any thing of M. de St. Vallier's affair? It seems he courted Mademoiselle de Ruvroi, and prevailed on his majesty, no less a person, to sign the marriage contract. He then very confidently borrows ten thousand crowns of Mad. de Ruvroi, as the portion he was to receive with her daughter : having got the money into his hands, he goes home, sends her a promisory note for the money she had lent him, disappears, and is gone I don't know where. When the king was made acquainted with the affair, he said that M. de St. Vallier might make a jest of Mad. de Ruvroi and her daughter, but that he would not suffer him to make a jest of him ; upon which he has had notice given him, that unless he immediately returns to fulfil the articles, by marrying the young lady, he must never think of returning again. His majesty has likewise ordered him to deliver up his post, or that it shall be immediately taxed. This behaviour of St. Vallier is so complete a piece of folly, that every one imagines it is a trick to draw the father in to give his consent to the match. The king has bestowed a brevet de retenue on St. Vallier of an hundred thousand livres, besides a pension of six thousand francs, in favour of the marriage. So you see these brevets are not so rare but that they are given sometimes.

I have received yours of the fifth from Grignan, which has delivered me from the uneasiness I was under concerning your health. You say a thing that is very true, and which I am thoroughly sensible of, that *the days on which one does not expect any letters, are taken up on expecting the days on which one is to receive them.* There is a certain degree in friendship, in which one feels always the same things ; but you require an easiness from your friends which they will not pretend to promise

promise you ; for instance, you would not have them employ themselves in serving you, in soliciting your affairs, and interesting themselves about you ; now I think it is wholly impossible for you and them to agree on this head ; for, unluckily, these are just the things that they have the strongest inclinations to do. You have given me a great satisfaction by mentioning my dear grand children to me. I imagine you will take great joy in remarking the opening of their little reason. I could heartily wish you would not go to Aix ; you will be more at your ease at Grignan, and it will be a means of hastening M. de Grignan's return. A proposal of M. de Grignan, I expect a long letter from him, I assure him : can it be possible that he should find the days too short to write to me, when I find them so long, that in my conscience I think one could finish a house, if one was to begin to build it early in the morning ? Mad. de Montespan is going on with hers, and amuses herself greatly among the workmen. M^{ON}SIEUR visits her frequently ; she goes sometimes to St. Cloud to a party at Ombre, and several ladies go to Clagni to visit her. M. de Pontevraud, who went there in order to pass a few days with her father, whom she is passionately fond of, at her arrival found him speechless, and on the point of relapsing into the same condition in which he was some time ago. This was a cruel mortification to her. The abbe Fetu continues to manage her as he pleases ; I cannot choose but admire the care that Providence takes to amuse him ; for no sooner is one gone to Lyons than another comes from Anjou.

It is said at Mr. Colbert's, and at the marshal de Villeroy's, that Monteculli † has very humbly repassed the Rhine, and that M. de Turenne, through excess of civility, has waited on him back, and repassed that river after him ; our enemies, poor creatures, are at their wits-end ; the very sight of M. de Turenne confounds them. I am making up my packet at the cardinal's. He has a small touch of the gout. I hope this will be a means of putting a stop to his leaving us. I pity you

† General of the Imperial army, and one of the greatest captains of that age.

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you for not having the pleasure to see him while he is yet among us.

We hear for certain that Huys was taken the fifth or sixth, without the loss of a man. Yesterday the queen went to a collation at Trianon. She stopt first at the church, and then at Clagni, where she took up Mad. de Montespan, and carried her in the coach with her to Trianon.

L E T T E R CCXLII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 14 June, 1675.

INSTEAD of visiting you in your apartment, my dear, I sit down to converse with you in a letter, now I am so unhappy as not to have you with me. the most natural consolation I can find is to write to you, to receive your letters, to speak of you, or to take some step for your affairs. I passed the afternoon yesterday with the cardinal de Retz: you cannot possibly guess what we talk of when we are together. Let me know how you bear the air at Grignan, and whether it has already began to prey upon you; how you enjoy your health, and whether I may represent to myself your lovely person in its full beauty, your picture is very agreeable, but far less so than your person, without reckoning that it wants the entertaining power of speech. Be not in pain about my health; the rule I observe at present is to be irregular; I am not sensible of any indisposition; I make every thing yield to the pleasure of being with our cardinal. I lose none of the hours he can oblige me with, and he is very obliging in this respect. I shall be the more sensibly touched with his departure, and his absence; but this does not prevent my indulging myself in the pleasure of his conversation: I never think of sparing myself; after having felt the pain of leaving you, I have nothing to fear from any less tender attachment. Were it not for him, and for your affairs, I should go a little to Livri; but I make every consideration yield to these, which are above all my little pleasures, I dined yesterday with the coadjutor at the cardinal's: I have left him in charge to inform you of that part of ecclesiastical history. Mr. Joli * preached

* Claude Joli, bishop of Agen.

at the opening of the assembly ; but as he took an ancient text, and preached only ancient doctrine, his sermon seemed a piece of Antiquity. There might be fine reflections made on this article.

They say that Mr. de Turenne, as it were, conducts the enemy's troops to their quarters. My heart is much oppressed with the thoughts of losing the cardinal; the repeated intercourse of friendship and conversation, which has so lately passed between us, redoubles my grief ; he parts from hence to-morrow. I have not yet received your letters. Believe, my dear, that it is not possible to love more than I love you : I am not animated with any thing but what has some relation to you. Mad. de Rochébonne has writ to me in a very affectionate manner ; she told me with what sentiments you received and read my letters at Lyons. I see, my dear, you are grown weak as well as I.

D'Hacqueville has sent you such a large packet, that it would be ridiculous to pretend to tell you any news now. The queen dined yesterday at the Carmelites of Boulin with Mad. de Montespan and Mad. de Fontevraud ; you see in what manner this friendship turns out. Mad. de Montespan continues fully employed in works and decorations of the enchanted palace that is erecting for her at Trianon. I represent her to myself like Dido building Carthage. My heart is very heavy on account of our Cardinal ; he leaves us to-morrow, my dear ; to-morrow, only think of that : I am ready to sink with grief when I think of it.

L E T T E R CCXLIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 19 June, 1675.

I ASSURE you, my dear, that next to the leave I took of you at Fountainbleau, to which nothing can be compared, I could not have taken a more melancholy one, than I did yesterday of the cardinal de Retz, at Mr. de Caumartin's, four leagues from hence. I dined there on Monday, and found him in the midst of his three faithful friends ; their dejected countenances drew the tears into my eyes : and when I saw his eminence behaving with his usual constancy and firmness of mind and

and yet with overflowing tenderness and goodness for me, I could not support the sight. We passed the afternoon in one of the most agreeable woods in the world; and the evening found us in the same delightful place, engaged in a variety of conversations, so good, so tender, so amiable, so obliging both to you and me, that I am deeply affected with it. I would have returned to Paris, but they detained me without much difficulty. I slept ill; in the morning I embraced our dear cardinal with tears, without the power of saying a word to the rest of the company. I returned hither very melancholy; and I am not yet well recovered from the grief of this separation.

I am sorry the account you sent me of the assembly of the clergy has not been read; the fidelity of the post is sometimes an inconvenience. The chevalier de Buousson is gone from hence. He brings you a fan, which I think extremely pretty: instead of little Cupids, there is a crew of little chimney-sweepers, the prettiest in the world. Can it be true, that la Simiane is parted from her husband on the pretence of his gallantries? What simplicity! I should have advised her to have been on an equal foot with him. I think the time long, as well as you, my dear, and perhaps more than you, from one post to another. Time, which is often disagreeable to us by the swiftness of his flight, sometimes slackens his wing, as you say; and, in short, we are never contented with him. I cannot yet accustom myself not to see you, nor meet you, nor find you, or even to expect you. I am grieved at your absence, and unable to divert my thoughts from it. The cardinal had a little effaced you out of my memory; but you are so much mingled in our conversations, that after I had well considered it, I found it was you, who rendered him so dear to me. You see, I improve little by your philosophy: I am pleased to find that you yourself are not wholly exempted from the weakness of humanity.

There have been some few *gripings* in Brittany, and at Renne there was a fit of the *stone colick*. M. de Chaulmes, attempting to disperse the people by his presence, was conducted home with a shower of stones: but really

really this is carrying their insolence to a great height. The little person has written to her sister, that she wants sadly to be at Sitten, for that she is frightened to death every day ; you know what she went to look after in Brittany.

The duke is engaged in the siege of Limbourg. The prince remains with the king : you may judge how great is his uneasiness. I do not think that my son is at this siege, nor was at that of Huys. I am every day in expectation of hearing from him, but how great is my impatience to hear from you, my dear !

I send you a little piece, written with much spirit, it is a character of the cardinal. He who writ it is not of the number of his intimate friends ; he has not the least design that he should ever see it, or that it should come abroad. He does not directly pretend to commend him. I like the piece for all these reasons. I send it you ; but I beg you not to give a copy of it. One is so tired with hearing one's own praises addressed to one's self, that it is a pleasure to be assured there was no design of giving pleasure, and that what is said, has the appearance of simple unaffected truth.

“ Paul de Gondi, cardinal de Retz, is a man of an elevated turn, and extensive capacity ; but has more ostentation than real greatness of soul ; his memory is extraordinary, his expressions rather strong than correct. His disposition is so easy, that he tamely and weakly bears the complaints and reproaches of his friends. He has a little piety, with some shew of religion ; and the appearance of ambition, without the passion. He has been led by his vanity and advisers to many great undertakings, but such as were almost always inconsistent with his profession. Without any design of profiting himself thereby, he stirred up the greatest commotions in the state. Far from being the declared enemy of cardinal Mazarine, with a view of succeeding him in his department, he thought of nothing but rendering himself formidable to that minister, and indulging himself in the false vanity of being considered as his opponent. He had address enough to obtain a red hat, by availing himself of the public misfortunes ; he endured imprisonment with fortitude, and owed his liberty wholly to his

his resolution. His natural indolence supported him with reputation through several years of a vagabond and exiled life; he maintained himself in the archbishopric of Paris against all Mazarine's power; yet resigned it after that minister's death, without knowing what he did, or without having made use of that conjuncture to serve either his friends or his dependants. He was present at several conclaves, where his conduct increased his reputation. He is naturally sluggish; nevertheless, he is indefatigable in his operations, when spurred on by necessity; and when he has done, sets himself down with indifference. He has great presence of mind, and is so happy in turning to advantage the incidents of fortune, that one would be induced to think he had foreseen and desired them. He loves story-telling, is fond of surprising all who hear him, with wonderful adventures, and is often obliged for assistance more to imagination than memory. Most of his good qualities are counterfeit; and nothing has contributed so much to his reputation, as knowing how to throw a pleasing light on his imperfections. Whatever pains he may have taken to appear engrossed by hatred or friendship, he is equally insensible of both. He is incapable of indulging either aversion or avarice, perhaps through indolence. He has borrowed more of his friends, than any private man could hope to repay; it fed his vanity to find he had so much credit, and to shew his endeavours to acquit himself. He has neither taste nor delicacy, amuses himself with every thing, and is pleased with nothing. He artfully avoids letting any one see how very shallow is his knowledge. His retreat is at once the most glaring, and the falsest action of his life. It is a sacrifice he has made to his pride, under pretext of devotion; he flies from a court he can no longer attend, and retires from a world that already avoids him."

L E T T E R CCXLIV.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday evening 21 June, 1675.

I AM so uneasy, my dear child, at not having heard from you all this week, that I hardly know what to do with myself. I cannot tell who to blame; I am

well assured that you have wrote to me. I dread my journey to Brittany, on account of the confusion it throws our correspondence into. I have ended your two affairs here, so that I shall now set out as soon as possible, that I may be the sooner back, and there is no coming back, you know, without first setting out.

The siege of Limbourg goes on still: we are all in painful expectation of hearing news from thence, as well as from M. de Turenne, who, say they, is near enough to come to an engagement with this same Montecuculli. I am in hopes, however, that nothing will happen, because we expect so many different things. After all we must submit to Providence. Though my son is not at Limbourg, nevertheless, I cannot help being interested there. And now, my dear, be pleased with me or not, but yesterday, I was bad, in the fact, with a view of pleasing you, and by way of precaution for my journey; for I thought as well as you, that it was quite necessary, considering the anxiety of mind I have laboured under for these two months past. I have had a number of visitors, and am quite bruised with keeping my bed these two days after my bleeding: it was a high joke to see how ill I bore this confinement. Mademoiselle de Min was ready to burst with laughing. I have just had a letter from my son, who informs me, that they have got possession of the Dutch half moon at Limbourg, that the miners are at work upon the bastion, that there are several of the officers and men killed and wounded, and that M. de la Marck has done wonders. I am, my dearest and lovely child, most devotedly yours.

L E T T E R CCXLV.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 26 June, 1675.

I HAVE received the letters of two posts at once, my dear countess; I concluded you had writ to me. You are a most agreeable correspondent; and your amity is accompanied and assisted by such charms as render it delicious. Though the Coadjutor despises these sentiments, I imparted some of yours to him: he dined with me, and we talked much of you.

Madame

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE. 171

Madame Dupuis Dufou came to pay me a visit: I had forgot she was a widow, and took her dress for a masquerading habit. The departure of Madame de Toscane from hence, is much doubted here; your ill fortune will decide it. It is certain, my dear, that we are very near neighbours, compared to the distance between Aix and the rocks, a great distance gives me as much pain as it gives you. Alas! we are widely separated, as we foresaw with grief the last winter, when we were so near one another. Can there be in life a more cruel misfortune?

Our cardinal will be to-morrow at Chalons; he has writ to me in the tenderest manner; I have sent you his letter. As to that little perfuming-pot which he desires to make you a present of, dispense with me, my dear, for not returning it in so unhandsome a manner. There is nothing noble in that fancied generosity. I think I have a soul disinterested enough; and I have given proofs of it: but there are occasions, in which it is the rudest ingratitude to refuse. What reason is there, why the cardinal de Retz should not have the privilege of making you such a present? How would you have him dispose of this trifle? He has given up his plate to his creditors: if he should add this little piece to it, it might perhaps be valued at an hundred crowns. It is a curiosity, a token of remembrance, a little ornament for a cabinet. Such kind presents may, and ought to be received with good nature, and without any difficulty; and, as he observed this winter, it is beneath magnanimity to refuse them; it is esteeming them too much, to consider them as matters of such consequence. In a word, my dear, I cannot prevail with myself to give him so much pain. Can you be sensible of the pleasure it will be to him, to give you this little mark of his friendship, without being ashamed to refuse it with so much incivility? Are you to be taught that this excess of vain glory, in being above receiving a present, is a fault, and can gain you no esteem? You say, that if I desired any thing of you, I should be glad to have you comply with me in it. I believe it: but I am well assured, that if you disapproved it, as I tell you mine, you would make me change my opinion in that instant,

instant, and I should yield, without hesitation, to your reasons. If I am firm in my opinion, it is certainly because I know I have reason on my side, and will submit the judgment to any person you shall name. In the mean time, I will say no more; I should think it an injury to your understanding. After all, it is to M. de Grignan that the cardinal makes the present. I believe it is already sent from Commerci: I will put it up in the bundle with your work.

We very well understand your excuse to the Capuchin, 'That it was very warm weather:' and we believe that, in the humour you are in, you can never go to confession. How is it possible to lay open one's heart to strangers! It is as much as you could prevail with yourself to do to your best friends. We knew the meaning of your answer perfectly well: unless you had been with us yourself, that conversation of yours could not have been more agreeable.

I thank you, my dear, for the pains you have taken to defend yourself so well against the charge of having ever been oppressed with the excess of my fondness. There was no need of such an obliging application. I believe of your tenderness every thing you desire me to believe; this persuasion makes the happiness of my life.' You explain yourself very well upon that will of yours, which it was impossible for me to divine, because you willed nothing. I ought to have understood you; and I shall do better than I have done upon this article, because we only wanted to understand one another. When my good fortune shall restore you to me, believe it, my dear, you will be a thousand times better satisfied with me than you have ever been: I wish we could already determine the day, when we may embrace each other.

You make an object of raillery of poor despised friendship; you think it is doing it too much honour to take it for a hindrance of devotion; and that it is a privilege not belonging to it, to be an obstacle to our salvation. But it ought to be considered comparatively: If it fills up our whole heart, that is enough to make it be condemned; and whatever it be that possesses us in this manner, it is more than sufficient to

tender

render us unfit to communicate. You see the syndic has exempted me from censure. In a word, it is a misfortune to have such lively passions. I must endeavour to render them more calm, and to recover the possession of my heart. I shall not be less yours; and yet I shall be more my own. Corbinelli is very urgent with me to take up this good resolution. It is true, that his absence adds to my uneasiness. He loves me well, and I love him; he is serviceable to me in every thing I desire; but I must deprive myself of every thing, during my voyage to Brittany. There is such a necessity for my going thither, that I must not leave it to the least uncertainty.

I desire you by no means to shave the head of the little marquis. I have consulted the skilful; it is the way to put his little brain into disorder, to give him rheums, sore eyes, and little black teeth; in a word, he is too weak to bear it. Let his hair be cut short with scissars; this is all you can do at present.

Mr. d'Hacqueville returned yesterday in the evening; I shall see him without much emotion. The cardinal's three faithful friends quitted him at Jouare: I fear and wish to see the two others. He has written me a second billet, to bid me a kind adieu. I beg him not to deprive me of the hope of seeing him again. I am extremely touched with his retreat; I will let you know from time to time in what state he is. His courage is infinite; I wish it may prove victorious.

I am very well recovered of my bleeding in the foot. I shall set out for Brittany very soon, but not before I have put the finishing hand to all your affairs here: otherwise I should not rest a moment in quiet.

There are some passages of your letters so obliging, so tender and agreeable, that I dare not undertake to answer them: I pretend to no more than to have a true taste of them, and to know their inestimable value.

* Answer to a letter from MADAME DE GRIGNAN, of the 19th of June.

I HAVE received your letter, which acquaints me with the distemper of the little marquis; I am very

much in pain about it ; and as for that bleeding, I cannot comprehend that it can do any good, considering the terror it strikes into a child of three years old. In my time we did not know what bleeding of children was. Madame de Sansei has obstinately persisted in refusing to have her son let blood, she gave him only a little powder for the worms, and he is recovered. I fear our child will be treated, in order to do him honour, as they treat the children of the king and the duke *. I shall have no rest, my dear, till I hear how this fever turns out.

Mr. de Turenne is very advantageously posted, he has not had an engagement, as it was reported. Our friends are all well in Flanders and in Germany.

* L E T T E R CCXLVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday, June 28, 1675.

MADAME de Vins seemed to express herself in a very tender manner yesterday, about you, my dear, it was after her manner, but that is no bad one : there seemed no *interlineations* in what she said, it came directly from the heart.

We have no news. The king's good star has caused the duke of Lorraine and the prince of Orange to repass the Meuse. Mr. de Turenne has now elbow room, so that we are no longer confined in any part. I am rejoiced that my letters are so pleasing to you, I can hardly think they are so very agreeable, as you say they are. I know they have no stiffness in them.

Give yourself no uneasiness about my journey to Britany ; you are too good and too attentive to my health. I will have nothing to do with *La Mouffe*, the dullness of others weighs me down more than my own. I have no time to go to Livri, I am too much taken up with business. I shall make all your compliments to Madame de Villars and Madame de la Fayette. This latter has still a little fever upon her. Adieu, my dearest child, believe me to be most sincerely yours.

LETTER

* The duke had just lost two of his children, within a few days of each other.

LETTER CCXLVII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 7 July, 1675.

GOOD God, my dear child, how little can I accustom myself to your absence! I have sometimes such cruel moments, when I reflect how we are situated, with respect to each other, that I can hardly bear them; and notwithstanding all my endeavours to drive such thoughts as far from me as possible, they will always return. I ask pardon of your philosophy, for my exposing my weakness to it; but for once do not be angry with me for indulging myself in the relief of telling you what, and how frequent my sufferings are, which I conceal from every one else. But see, we are going to set still a greater distance between us, are we mad! Methinks it looks as if we were going on either side, to throw ourselves into the sea, that we may have all France between us. God help us!

Two days ago I received a letter from our good cardinal, who is just upon the point of entering upon his retirement: I believe it will not be able for a considerable time, to eradicate from his heart, that regard he has for you: I am fully satisfied with the share that I know I have in him.

I find you are forced to make use of your authority to oblige your son to take his medicines: I think you are quite in the right of it. A little exertion of authority does not at all misbecome you, but it is very lucky for you that your young gentleman never saw you swallow a medicine yourself, for I am greatly afraid that in that case your example would overturn your precepts. I cannot help thinking how your brother mimicked you on one of these occasions, do you remember it? After all, I am delighted that the little marquis is out of danger, pray make use of the power you have over him, to manage him properly. I have entertained a very good opinion of him from his being so fond of you.

But you wait for my advice in regard to going to see the Grand Dutchess at Montelimar; M. de Grignan advises you to go, but you have no equipage ready: how must this be managed? Why I think you may

take your own time and go on foot. I can give a pretty good guess what your determination will be. We wait for her as if she was a *Colonna* or a *Mazarine*, for the oddity of the thing; to leave her husband, after having lived with him upwards of fifteen years; otherwise the honour is given to whom it is due. Her person will be disagreeable, but it will be made as well as possible.

It is somewhat extraordinary that all the interests and politicks of *Quantova* should so exactly tally with those of Christianity; and that the advice of his friends, should be exactly of M. de Condom. You cannot think how triumphant she appears in the midst of her workmen, who are no fewer than twelve hundred. The palace of the sun, or the enchanted gardens of *Armida*, are but a slight description, in comparison with what hers will be. I think you are very excellent in your lamentations on Brittany; I wish I had Corbinelli with me; you will have him at Grignan. Let me recommend him to your care; and I will take upon me to pay a visit to those rascals who throw stones into the patron's garden. I am told there are five or six blue bonnets in Lower Brittany, who want much to be hanged, in order to learn them how to speak. Upper Brittany is much more wise and prudent, it is my country you know.

I imagined that the desire of being in favour with the academy at Arles, might have made you send for some of M. de la R. F's *Maxims*. The *character* is done by him, and the things which made me approve of it, and shew it to the cardinal, was, its being written without any the least intention of being seen: It was a secret that I made myself mistress of, as it were by force, from my fondness of seeing a panegyric upon the absent, and that by a person who was neither the intimate friend, nor the flatterer. Our cardinal took the same pleasure in it as I did, in observing the manner, in which truth obliged even those who had no great regard for him, to speak concerning him, when they imagined that he would never come to the knowledge of it. We shall soon find how his retirement will sit upon him: unless it is the work of God it cannot but be bad.

We

We have had very cold weather here of late, but what most surprises me is, that you complain likewise of the cold in Provence: I do not think I found it cold there in June. Methinks I behold you living in perfect solitude, but I do not in the least pity you; I keep my pity for the many who are more proper subjects of it, in the rank of which I am the first. I find a great pleasure in being acquainted with the places, that hold those one loves and thinks on perpetually. Not to know how to find them in idea, throws a disagreeable obscurity over the imagination your chamber, and the closet in it, lent me: and yet I sometimes retire there alone to think of you, as not willing to spare myself too much.

Do you not intend to repair your terras? I cannot bear the thoughts of having it lie in ruins, it absolutely deprives you of the only good walk you have. Well, here is a letter of an infinite length, but you know what pleasure I take in chatting with you! Every other correspondence hangs upon my hands, because the great fish eat up the little ones you know. I embrace the little marquis, pray let him know that he has another mamma in the world besides yourself. I fancy I am worn out of his remembrance.

L E T T E R CCXLVIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 5 July, 1675.

I SIT down, my dear, to entertain you with a little of our good cardinal. I send you a letter he has written to you, pray advise him to write his history, it is what all his friends press him much to do: he writes me word that he is very well pleased with his desert, that he can look upon it without the least horror, and humbly hopes that God will support him in all his weaknesses. He expresses the sincerest regard for you, and desires me not to think of leaving Paris till I have finished all your affairs. He was received at St. Michael's * with transports of joy, the people were all on their knees, and received him as a protector sent them by God himself.

* The place of the cardinal's retreat, a remote village in the province of Brittany.

The troops who were quartered there, are taken off, and the officers waited on him for his orders to withdraw, and spare such as he should please to name. Cardinal Barzi has assured me, that the pope, without staying to receive our cardinal's letter, had sent him a brief, by which he gives him to understand that he supposes, and even desires that he will keep his hat; that the preserving his rank and dignity will in no wise impede the work of his salvation: and it is moreover added, that his holiness expressly commanded him not to make choice of any other place of retirement, than that of St. Dennis; but I much doubt this latter part of the report, so I only tell you my author for the former.

I am thoroughly persuaded, that he thinks no more about the perfuming pot: if I had desired him not to send it, it would only have served to put him in mind of it, so I thought it was best to take no notice of it. There is no news of importance stirring. Every thing goes on with spirit on Mr. de Turenne's side.

The other day there was one madame Noblet, of the Vitri family, who was playing at basset with MONSIEUR. Mention was made of monsieur de Vitri, who is very ill: upon which she says, addressing herself to MONSIEUR, Ah! Sir, I saw him this morning, poor man! his face looked just like a *stratagem*. For God's sake what could the woman mean? Adieu, my dearest and best beloved.

LETTER CCXLIX.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 10 July, 1675.

I ASSURE you, my dear child, it has given me the greatest uneasiness, to find that you are under so much concern about my health. My dear, your way of reasoning is expressly calculated to make you uneasy. You say I made a mystery of my being bled, to you; and that you are sure there is something more than mere precaution at the bottom; believe me, my dearest child, believe me that it was just as I told you: set your heart at ease then, and be assured that I will never deceive you, but abide faithfully by the agreement we made, not to spare each other on these occasions; I will

will always let you know how I am without disguise, so trust to me.

And now, my dear, I must acquaint you, that we have gained your little cause with Ventadour. The princesses de Tingri were present at the judges entry, and so was I, they have sent to return us their thanks. It is a pity that Molière is dead, for he might have made a charming farce of what has happened at the Hotel de Bellievre. You must know they have refused four hundred thousand francs for that fine house, which twenty merchants would have purchased, because it looks into four streets, and they might have built twenty good houses upon the ground; but the family would not part with it on any terms, because, forsooth, it is the family house, and the shoes of the old chancellor has touched the threshold; and they are used to the parish church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois; and so for this antiquated piece of dotage, they let the house lie upon their hands, and pay about twenty thousand livres a year for their lodging.

I am now going to answer yours of the third; let us talk a little of our good cardinal. It was not true that the pope had sent him a brief, when madame de Vins wrote you word that he had: but it is confirmed now. It was cardinal Spada who took upon him to assert that it would be so. The good pope, my dear, has done neither better nor worse, not to make the comparison, than Trivelin in the play, who wrote and delivered the answer to a letter before it was wrote. We are all of us heartily rejoiced at it, and think no otherwise than that he will conform to his holiness's will. We suppose he will write him a letter, wherein he will tell him the true reasons of his being desirous of laying down the purple, and that he is far from imagining that the keeping it is incompatible with his salvation, and that if his holiness persists in commanding him to do it, he will chearfully acquiesce. So that he will still remain our good cardinal. He finds his solitude agree very well with him, he says so, and we ought to believe him: he did not take a final leave of me; on the contrary, he gave me the greatest hopes to believe that I should see him again, and seemed to take a pleasure, not only
in

in giving me that consolation, but himself likewise. He will retain his equipage. He writes me a little note, now and then, which I preserve with the greatest care, he always makes mention of you in them: I would have you write to him on this head, and advise him to amuse himself a little.

It is said that M. de St. Vallier has married Mademoiselle de Ruvroi; the affair of his disgrace was a mere trick. Little St. Vallier is out of danger, as to her life, but we cannot say so much with respect to her beauty. Our coadjutor's good fortune continues as brilliant as ever, and I am of your opinion, that he has more reason to be pleased with his stay in Paris, than the archbishop of Paris himself.

You did extremely well in waiting on the dutchess, it would have been a very condemnable piece of pride not to have done it. You are likewise very much in the right to remain at Grignan, it will hasten your husband's return thither: perhaps too you will have there madame de Coulanges, Vardes, and Corbinelli. Madame de Coulanges writes me word, that your *batred* is a very convenient one, and that she has brought you into a very agreeable train of correspondence. Pr'ythee, my dearest girl, do not thank me for what I do for you and Mademoiselle de Meri; rather rejoice with me, that I have the satisfaction of being employed in any thing that relates to you, or can please you, it is the most sensible pleasure that I can enjoy.

L E T T E R CCL.

To the Same.

Paris, Tuesday 12 July, 1675.

YOU cannot figure to yourself a finer chace, my dear, than that which we have after Monsieur de B—— and Monsieur de M——. They set off, they squat, they run a length, they wind and turn, but we still keep scent of them; we have excellent noses; we are in full chace, and if once we catch them, as I hope we shall, I give you my word they shall be well drubbed, and then, agreeable to the laudable practice of good huntsmen, we will leave them there, and never touch them again. I will let you know the end of all this:

this: I have no notion of giving such an affair up; but if I am sometimes in your way between the greatest captains in the world, the abbe * is certainly in my way towards being the most active and busy of all others in your affairs; he always gets the start of me, and that, added to his superior abilities, makes him beat more ground than I do. He is out by seven o'clock in the morning, consulting every word, point, and stop in the transaction. There are some few disputes indeed between Mademoiselle de Meri and him now and then; and what do you think occasions them? Why, the great exactness of the abbe more than any consideration of interest: but if an affront is offered to arithmetic, or the inviolable rule that two and two make four is broke in upon, the poor abbe is beside himself. It is his humour, and he should be indulged in it: on the contrary, Mademoiselle de Meri, who is quite of a different way of thinking, when ever she takes it in her head to support an argument, never drops it, but pushes it to the very last; and when the abbe finds himself overborne by a torrent of words, he falls in a passion, and puts on the uncle, by commanding silence: but, dear Sir, this is really not polite; *polite* is a new affront, every thing is overturned then, he will not hear a word more, and then the main argument is forgot, and little accidental circumstances are made points of consequence: here I am forced to take the field, and run first to one and then to the other, like the cook in the play †; but I make rather a better ending, for I set them both a laughing, and the conclusion of the matter is, that the next day Mademoiselle de Meri returns to our good abbe to ask his advice again; and he as readily gives it, and busies himself to serve her: he has his humours, as I said before, and who amongst us is free from them? However, I will take upon me to assure you, that here shall never be any thing serious in their disputes, so long as I am a party concerned.

Adieu, my dearest child. I have no news for you. Our cardinal is extremely well; I would have you write to him, and desire him not to waste his time in fruitless

replies.

* De Coulanges.

† See the fourth scene of the first act in Moliere's *Miser*.

replies and expostulations with the court of Rome ; but to obey with a good grace, and wear his old hat still, as our fat abbe * says, who by the way complains greatly of your silence. M. de la R. F. sends you word that his gout is perfectly returned, and imagines that poverty will return with it ; for he can find no joy in his riches, while tormented with that disorder.

* L E T T E R CCLI.

To the Same,

Paris, Friday, July 19, 1675.

GUESS from whence I write to you, my dear : it is from M. de Pomponne's, as you will perceive by the few lines which Mad. de Vins sends you with this. I have been, together with her, the abbe Arnauld, and d'Hacqueville, to see the procession of St. Genevieve pass by ; we returned in very good time ; we were back by two o'clock ; there are numbers that will not be back to-night. Do you know that this same procession is reckoned a very fine sight ? It is attended by every one of the religious orders, in their respective habits, the curates of the several parishes, and all the canons of Notre Dame, preceded by the archbishop of Paris in his pontificals, and on foot, giving his benediction to the right and left as he goes, till he comes to the cathedral ; I should have said to the left only, for the abbe de St. Genevieve marches on the right bare-footed, and preceded by one hundred and fifty monks bare-footed also : the cross and mitre are borne before him as an archbishop, and he gives his benedictions in the same manner, but with the greatest devotion and humility, and with a penitential and fasting air, which shew you that he is to say mass at Notre Dame. The parliament, in their red robes, and the principal companies follow the shrine of the saint, which glitters with precious stones, and is carried by twenty men clad in white, and bare-footed. The provost of the merchants, and four counsellors, are left as hostages at the church of St. Genevieve, for the return of this precious treasure. You will ask me, perhaps, what the shrine was exposed for ? It was to put a stop to the continual

* The abbe de Pontcarre.

continual rains we have had, and to obtain warm and dry weather, which very fortunately happened at the very time they were making preparations for the procession; which, as it was intended to obtain for us all manner of good things in general, I presume we owe his majesty's return to it, who is expected here on Sunday next. In my letter of Wednesday, I will write you all that is writeable.

M. de la Trousse is conducting a detachment of six thousand men to marshal de Crequi, who is to join M. de Turenne. La Fare and the others remain with the Dauphin's gens d'armes, in the army commanded by the prince. The other day MADAME, and Mad. de Monaco, desired d'Hacqueville, at the hotel de Grammont, to scour the streets *incog* and walk about the Tuilleries; as her highness is not much given to a disposition for gallantry, her dignity sits very easy on her. The Tuscan princess is expected every hour. This is another of the blessings obtained by the shrine of St. Genevieve. Adieu, my dearest and best beloved: you are so remarkable for your inviolable love of truth, that I do not abate myself a single expression of your kindness towards me; and you may judge then how happy it makes me.

L E T T E R CCLII.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 24 July, 1675.

THE weather is extremely hot, my dear, so that instead of tossing and tumbling in my bed, the whim took me to get up (though it is but just five o'clock in the morning) and chat a little with you.

The king arrived at Versailles on Sunday; the queen, Mad. de Montespan, and all the other ladies went to take possession of their former apartments. In a short time after his arrival, his majesty went to make the usual visits: I shall have more intelligence before I conclude my letter. The reason of my being so ill-informed of what passed at Versailles is, that I came but last night from M. de Pomponne's, whither Mad. de Pomponne had invited d'Hacqueville and I in so pressing a manner, as there was no resisting. Indeed Mr.

de Pomponne appeared entirely glad to see us. We had a great deal of very entertaining conversation; among other odd whims, we could not help wishing to see the inside of the cards a little, in the many occurrences that fall in one's way in the course of life; we should then see into what passes in families, where we should find hatred, mistrust, anger, and contempt, in the room of all those fine things that are set to outward shew, and pass upon the world for realities. I was wishing for a closet hung with such cards, instead of pictures. We carried this odd notion very far, and diverted ourselves greatly with it. We were for opening d'Hacqueville's head, to furnish ourselves from thence with some of these curious anecdotes, and pleased ourselves with thinking how the world is in general imposed upon by what they see and take for truth. Things are supposed to be so and so in such an house; you would think that such a couple adore each other; but stay a while, and turn up the cards, and you will see that they hate each other most completely. You would imagine that such an event proceeded from such a cause; a little familiar draws aside the curtain, and it appears to be the very reverse; and so in every thing throughout life. This afforded us infinite amusement. Think, my dear, what a deal of time one must have upon one's hands to entertain you with such trifles. You see the consequence of rising so early in the morning.

I wait for cooler weather before I take physic, and for cooler councils in Brittany * before I venture thither. Mad. de Lavardin, de la Troche, Mr. d'Haroui, and I, shall consult together about a proper time for our journey, having no design to run ourselves into the midst of the commotions that at present tear our poor province to pieces: they seem to increase daily; and those devils have got as far as Fougères, burning and ransacking all the way as they go along. This is rather too near our *rocks*. They have begun a second time to plunder

* The exorbitant taxes that had been imposed upon these unhappy people had obliged numbers of them to have recourse to arms, in order to free themselves from the load of exactions that it was impossible for them to bear.

plunder the *bureau* † at Rennes: Mad. de Chaulnes is frightened almost to death, at the continual menaces they vent against her husband. I was told yesterday that some of the mutineers had actually stopt her in her coach, and that even the most moderate of them had sent Mr. de Chaulnes notice, who is at fort Louis, that if the troops he had sent for took a single step towards entering the province, his wife would run the hazard of being torn to pieces by the insurgents. However, it is certainly necessary that some troops should march against them, for things are come to such a pitch, that lenitives are of no longer service. But, on all accounts, it would not be prudent for us to set out before the storm is a little subsided, and we see the issue of this violent distraction. It is hoped that the approaching harvest will help to disperse this riotous assembly; for after all they must get in their grain, and there are near six or seven thousand of them, not one of whom can speak a word of French.

M. de Boucherat was relating to me the other day, that a curate having received a pendulum clock that had been sent him from *France*, as they call this part of the country, in the sight of some of his parishioners, they immediately cried out in their language, that it was a new tax, they were very sure of it, they saw it plainly. The good curate, with an excellent presence of mind, and without seeming at all confused, said to them, Children, you are mistaken, you don't know what you are talking about; it is an *indulgence*. This brought them all immediately upon their marrow-bones. You may by this specimen form a judgment of the understanding of these people.

Mademoiselle d'Eaubonne was married the day before yesterday. Your brother would very willingly part with the post he has * for that of colonel of the regiment of Champagne. It is a post that M. de Grignan has had; but we are by no means for having him make this addition to his expences in these unsettled times; it would not cost him less than fifteen or sixteen thousand francs.

There

† A kind of exchequer established in all the principal towns in France, for the collection of the king's revenues.

* Guidon, or standard-bearer, in the dauphin's gens d'armes.

There are numbers of officers come back with the king, the grand master, Messieurs de Soubise, Termes, Brancas, la Garde, Villars, the count de Fiesque, &c. as for this latter, the people are apt to say of him, *di cortesia piu che di guerra amico**. He had not been a month at the army. M. de Pomponne, says that it was impossible to wish more heartily to come to engagement than the king, or to be more resolved to march at the head of the first ranks when they imagined they were likely to have a battle at Limbourg. He gave us an excellent description of his majesty's manner of living with those about him, especially the prince and the duke. These little details give me pleasure in the hearing.

When I desired you to advise our good cardinal to amuse himself by writing his own history, I did it in compliance with those of his friends, who had desired me to try my own endeavours with him on this head, and they promised me, one and all, that they would support me with their united remonstrances, that he might see it was the wish and desire of all who truly loved him. I can assure you he seems to enjoy a very good state of health. Things are no longer with him as they were last winter; a proper regimen, and a plain diet, have perfectly restored him. You are very right in what you say upon people's way of talking of his affair here; but, thank God, I have heard it only at second hand, for all those people whom I am acquainted with look upon it in its true light, and esteem it a very glorious action. His friends would by no means have him make himself a prisoner at St. Michael, but to go sometimes to Commerci, and sometimes to come to St. Dennis.

Mad. de Montlouet has the small-pox: her daughter is in the greatest concern, and the mother is no less unhappy that she cannot prevail on her to quit her for an instant, to take a little air, as her physicians have advised her to do. I believe they are neither of them the brightest in point of understanding, but in respect to sentiments of tenderness and affection for each other, they are just as you and I are. M. de Pomponne said the

* That is, Rather fond of the court than the camp.

the other day, after owning that there is no certain general rule, that it would seem as if Mad. de Sevigne passionately loved Mad. de Grignan; but, do you know the inside of the cards? Shall I tell you how the affair stands? Why, *she does love her passionately*; to which he might have added to your perpetual glory, and is *as passionately beloved by her*.

I have your silks; I wish I could find a person to send them to you by, for they make too small a bundle for the carriage, and too large a one for the post. I think I may say the same of this letter.

L E T T E R CCLIII.

To the Same.

Paris, Friday 26 July, 1675.

I BELIEVE, my dear, I shall write you but a short letter to-day, because it is very late. You must know that I am just come from the opera, with Monsieur and Madame de Pomponne, the abbe Arnauld*, Mad. de Vins, Mad. de la Troche, and d'Hacqueville. This was designed as an entertainment for the abbe Arnauld†, who has not seen any thing of this kind since Urban VIII. when he was at Rome with M. d'Angres; he was very well pleased with it. I have compliments to make you from all the company, and especially Mr. de Pomponne; I beg you seriously to depend upon his friendship.

Yesterday I saw the dutchess of — : she seemed to me to answer exactly your description of her. I thought some traces of discontent were legible in her countenance; she had an air of reserve, and melancholy softened with tenderness; but I believe she will soon recover her gaiety and her beauty. She has succeeded very well at Versailles; the king thought her very amiable, and will take care to make her spend her time there very agreeably. Every one is ambitious to shew the justness of the generosity of his sentiments in pitying and in praising her. She was transported with Versailles,

* Elder brother to Mr. de Pomponne.

† Henry Arnauld, uncle to Mr. de Pomponne, first known by the name of the abbe St. Nicholas, and afterwards by that of bishop of Angres; he was esteemed the most pious prelate in the church of France.

faillies, and with the caresses of the noble family there; she has not yet seen the *DAUPHIN* nor *MADemoiselle*. Her reputation has never had the least blemish; so nothing more can be desired of her, but only a happier destiny. She talked with me much of you: I told her you still subsisted upon the air of Paris; she believes it, and says there is no living in any other climate. I thought she would never have done speaking of you, and of the bad supper she gave you: she was very well pleased with Mr. de Grignan, and with Ripert, who took so much care of her when her coach was overturned.

Mademoiselle d'Armagnac is married to that Cadaval: she is very handsome. The chevalier de Lorraine is to perform the ceremony of espousing her; she is much to be pitied for going so far to have the nuptials consummated.

I shall send the airs of the new opera to Mr. de Grignan in a little time: if he be with you I embrace him, and desire him to take the utmost care of you. I do not know whether it was the cardinal de Retz who recommended it to me to take care of your interests; but I am never pleased longer than I am doing something for you. His recommendation has a greater effect upon me than his benediction. Let me have an account of all your concerns; nothing is little, nothing is indifferent.

LETTER CCLVI.

To the Same.

Paris, Wednesday 31 July, 1675.

IN my last, my dear, I told you that the madness of our Bretons has put a stop to my journey for a while. The shrine of St. Genievieve has given us most admirable weather. La St. Genan is in the road to heaven; the good La Villars has not received your letter, which is a great grief to her. Here is the history of a small adventure that happened a few days ago; a poor lace-maker here in the Faubourg St. Marci-an, was taxed ten crowns, in consequence of a new impost upon freedoms, he had not the money to pay,

pay, the collectors came after him day by day, he begged a little time to raise the money in, which they refused to grant him, and seized on his poor little bed, and what few things he had about him, not leaving him so much as a dish to eat out of; the poor wretch finding himself reduced to this condition, grew perfectly furious upon it, and catching hold of three of his children, who happened to be in the room with him, cut their throats; his wife fled away with the fourth in her arms. The poor man is confined in the chatalet and is to be hanged in a day or two; he says that he regrets nothing, but the not having killed his wife and the other child which she saved. You may depend upon it, my dear, that this is every word of it truth: Think to what an extremity this unhappy creature must have been reduced! I do not believe that there has been an instance of such violent rage since the siege of July.

Every thing was ready for setting out for Fontainebleau this day, where pleasures were made pains by their multiplicity, when an unexpected blow, struck a damp to the promised joys. Mr. de Turenne is killed, a general consternation succeeds. The prince posts away for Germany, and all France is in desolation. Instead of seeing an end put to the campaign, and enjoying the pleasures of your brother's return, we are now more at a loss than ever. This is the world in its glory, these are events truly surprising, you are fond of such; but I am assured that this will sensibly affect you. I am a fearful convert to Mr. Desbrosses doctrine of predestination: for can we doubt of an all ruling, all directing Providence, or that the piece which singled M. de Turenne from the midst of ten or twelve people who were round him, was loaded with his death from all eternity?

You should by all means write to the cardinal de Retz, we have all of us written to him; he is extremely well, and leads a very religious life: we have advised him to go to Commerci. He will be greatly afflicted with the death of M. de Turenne. Write likewise to the cardinal de Bouillon, he is inconsolable. Every
one

one is looking for their friends, to talk about this unhappy accident. The people gathered in crowds yesterday in the streets, weeping and bewailing the loss of so great a man. Every other business but that of sorrow, seemed wholly at a stand.

Monsieur de Forbin * is to set out with six thousand men, to punish our poor Brittany, that is, in other words, to ruin it: they go by the way of Nantes; for which reason madame de Lavardin and I shall take the route of Mans. We are looking out for a favourable season to set out in. Monsieur de Pomponne told Mr. de Forbin, that he had some lands in Brittany, naming at the same time those that belong to my son.

* Captain-lieutenant of the first company of the king's mousquetaires, and lieutenant-general in his majesty's armies.



END OF VOL. III.

